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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER 1916.

THE KAISER AS HIS FRIENDS KNEW HIM.

BY A NEUTRAL DIPLOMAT.

AMONG the high German officials whose opinion of William the Second's foreign policies I quoted in my previous article, I do not recall a single one whose loyalty or sense of propriety did not prevent his offering any personal criticisms of the Emperor to whose service his best efforts were being devoted. An apprehensiveness, bordering on positive dread in many instances, of the ultimate consequences of the Kaiser's impetuosities was often apparent in the observations of their franker moments, but personal aspersions were never cast. This was, of course, no more than could have been expected from the well-bred men-of-the-world that they were. And in this connection it may be in point to add that not even among the rather gay and not always discreetly reserved officers of the Crown Prince's suite (with whom I was thrown not a little during their visit to India in 1911) was loose criticism of the Emperor ever heard, either by myself or by others who enjoyed still fuller opportunities than I had for meeting them on intimate and confidential terms.

Frederick William himself was, I regret to record, far less discreet than those about him in his references to his imperial progenitor, and I recall very clearly that quick-tongued youth's sarcastic allusions to certain rulings of the Kaiser in the matter of the treatment of the natives of some of the islands of German Melanesia. The Crown Prince, I should explain, I had found consumed with interest concerning the progress his people were making in several of their Pacific island colonies I had recently visited, and it was to his very palpable desire to 'pump me dry' of any information I might have picked up regarding these incipient 'places in the sun' that I owed a number of hours of conversation with him the edification of which would hardly otherwise have fallen to my lot.

The outburst I had in mind was led up to by my royal inquisitor's asking me for my views concerning the comparative progress of the three political divisions of the island of New Guinea, and by my replying that, if the criterion of judgment was to be the contentment, physical well-being, and economic usefulness of the native, I should rate British New Guinea first, Dutch New Guinea an indifferent second, and German New Guinea a very poor third. It was anything but a courtier-like speech on my part, but I was not meeting Frederick William in my official capacity, and, moreover, he had made a point of asking that I should give him perfectly frank answers to his questions. ('None of the "bull con",' as the Yankees say,' was the way he put it; 'give me the "straight goods."' Both expressions, as he confessed with a grin, he had picked up from a 'neat little filly from Kentucky' he had 'seen a bit of' at Ostend the previous summer.)

The Crown Prince, in spite of his undeniable personal courage, of which I saw several striking instances in the course of his Indian visit, is far from being what the Anglo-Saxons call a 'good sport,' and on this occasion he made no pretence of hiding his annoyance. Because, however, as transpired later, there were several other matters which he had in mind 'pumping' me on, he evidently thought it best not to vent his spleen for the moment on one whose usefulness was not quite exhausted. This befell subsequently, I may add, though under circumstances which have no especial bearing on my present subject.

Tapping his boot with his riding-whip—he had been playing polo—the Prince sat in a sort of spoiled-child pout of petulance for a minute or two, before bursting out with: 'Doubtless you're right. I've had hints of the same thing myself from private reports. It's all due to the pater's unwarranted interference in something he knows nothing about. Old X——' (mentioning the previous Governor of German New Guinea by name) 'has forgotten more about handling Papuans than the pater ever knew. The pater has put his foot in it every time he has moved in our Pacific colonies.' (It may be in order to explain that not only does the Crown Prince speak excellent English, but that on this Indian visit he made a point of resorting to English idioms, colloquialisms, and slang to an extent which at times became positively ridiculous. I have quoted here almost his exact language.)

Frederick William went on to give me a spirited and approving account of the manner in which a German colonist near Her-

bertshöhe had put an end to raids on his yam patch by planting on each corner-post of the enclosure the 'frizzly' head of a Papuan who had been shot in the act of making off with the succulent tubers, concluding with the dogmatic assertion that the only way to handle the black man was to 'bleed him white.'

I had the temerity to reply that, from what I had seen, the more 'old X——' continued to forget of what he thought he knew about handling Papuans, the better it would be for German colonial prospects in New Guinea, and as a consequence threw my royal interrogator into another fit of sulks. It is only fair to say that the 'interference' of which the Crown Prince waxed so unfilially censorious really consisted of measures calculated slightly—but only slightly—to mitigate the brutal repressiveness toward the natives which had characterised the German administration of New Guinea from the outset. The one bright spot in the brief but bloody annals of German overseas colonisation was the six or eight years' régime of the broad-minded and humane Dr. Solf—the present Colonial Secretary—in Samoa. This tiny and comparatively unimportant Pacific outpost was the single Teutonic colony in which I found the natives treated with anything approaching the humanitarian consideration extended to them so universally by the English and the French. Dr. Solf may well be, as has been occasionally hinted from Holland, the hope of those conservative and intelligent Germans who are known to be silently working for a reborn and 'de-Prussified' Fatherland after the war.

As I have said, the Crown Prince was the only highly placed German whom I ever heard speak slightly in a personal way of the Kaiser, and that impetuous youth was—as he still is—a law unto himself. Such loyalty and discretion, however, did not characterize all prominent Germans in private life, and it is to several of these I am indebted for the illuminating sidelights their observations and anecdotes threw on the human side of William II. Of such, I fancy the Baron Y——, who voyaged on the same steamer with me from Zanzibar to Port Said several years ago, had enjoyed perhaps the most intimate opportunities for an intelligent appraisal of his Emperor.

The Baron was a scion of one of the oldest and wealthiest of Bavarian noble families, a graduate of the *École des Beaux Arts* as well as Heidelberg, and to the fact that several years of his boyhood were spent at Harrow owed an English accent in speaking that language which betrayed no trace of Teutonic guttural. He was returning

from an extended hunting trip in British and German East Africa at the time I made his acquaintance, and was nursing a light grievance against his own Government from the fact that he had been rather better treated in the former than the latter. His attitude toward the Kaiser was somewhat different from that of any other German I have ever met, this, doubtless, being due to his own great wealth and assured position. There was little of the 'loyal and devoted subject' in this attitude, to which no better comparison suggests itself to me than that of a very heavy stock-holder in a corporation toward a general manager who is in no respect his social superior.

'The Kaiser's most pronounced characteristic,' said Baron Y—one evening as we paced the promenade, 'is his overweening vanity. His "ego" dwarfs his every other attribute, natural or acquired, and it is idle to try to understand what he is, what he does, what he stands for—and, incidentally, what the German people, in quite another sense, have to stand for—without taking that fact into consideration. It is the obsession of his own importance—I might even say his belief in his own omnipotence—that is responsible for his taking the so-called Divine Right of the Hohenzollerns more seriously, interpreting the term more literally, than any of his ancestors since Frederick the Great. It is his vanity that is responsible for his incessant shiftings of uniforms, for his posturings, his obvious attempts to conceal or distract attention from his shrunken arm. He is the most consummate master of stagecraft; indeed, the Fates spoiled a great producer of spectacles—one who would have eclipsed Reinhardt—to make, not an indifferent Emperor, but——' The Baron checked himself and concluded with: 'Perhaps I had best not say what I had in mind. Everything considered, however, I am convinced that it would have been better for Germany if William the Second had been stage-manager rather than Kaiser.'

Specific and intimate instance of the pettiness with which the Kaiser's vanity occasionally expressed itself Baron Y—gave me the following evening. I had been turning the pages of some of his German illustrated papers, and was unable to refrain from commenting, not only on the frequency with which the portrait of the Kaiser appeared, but also of the defiant 'come-one-come-all' attitude of all of those in which the War Lord appeared in uniform. The Baron laughed good-naturedly. 'The Kaiser's attitudinizings,' he said, 'never seem to strike the Prussians as in the least funny (they haven't much of a sense of humour, anyhow):

but we Bavarians have always taken them as quite as much of a joke as has the rest of Europe. Now this picture' (he began turning the pages of 'Ueber Land und Meer' in search of it), 'which is one of the most popular with the Prussians, we of Bavaria have always called "Ajax Defying the Lightning," and I am going to tell you the history of it.

'This picture is reproduced from one of several dozen almost identical photographs which have been taken of the Kaiser glowering into the emptiness of the upper empyrean from the vantage of a little basaltic crag which crops up at the forks of a road in one of the Imperial game preserves. I have always taken a sort of paternal interest in this apparently "to-be-continued-indefinitely" series of photographs, for it chanced that I was in the company of their central figure on the occasion when he discovered this now famous pedestal, and it was due to a suggestion of mine that he was enabled to turn his find to what he no doubt considers a most felicitous use.

'It was on one of the early days of an imperial hunting party—just the ordinary affair of its kind, with no one in particular from the outside on hand, and nothing especial in the way of sport offered—and the Kaiser, not being in very good fettle, had bidden me remain in the lodge with him to discuss some experiments I had been conducting on my estates with some drought-resisting barleys and lucernes, the seed of which had been sent to Germany by one of our "agricultural explorers" in Central Asia. The Kaiser's keenness for skimming the cream of the world and bringing it home for the German people is only exceeded by his vanity,' the Baron added parenthetically.

'Having heard all I had to report, my imperial host suggested a stroll in the forest, and it was while pushing on from tree to tree to study the efficacy of a new kind of chemically treated cement the foresters had been using to arrest the progress of decay that we wandered out upon the jutting crag shown in this picture. It was late in the afternoon, and by both of the two converging roads, several hundred metres of vista of each of which were commanded from our lofty eyrie, men were drifting back toward the lodge from the hunt. The dramatic possibilities of the unexpected vantage point—the manner in which one was able to step from behind the drop-curtain of the forest undergrowth to the front of the stage at the tip of the jutting crag—kindled the fire of the Kaiser's imagination instantly.

"What a place from which to review my hunting guests!"

he exclaimed, stepping forward and throwing out his chest in his best "reviewing" manner. "Strange I have never noticed it from the road. It must be because the light is so bad here. Yes, that is what the trouble is. They cannot see us even as clearly as we can see them." (He frowned his palpable disappointment that all eyes from below were not centred upon him where he stood in fine defiance in the middle of his new-found stage.)

"If I may venture a suggestion, Your Majesty," I said, "I think it is the dense shadow from that big tree on the next point that makes it so dark here. Do you not see that the sun is directly behind it at this hour? The removal of that out-reaching limb on the right would give this crag at least an hour of sunshine, but, as a practical forester, I should warn you that doing so would destroy the 'balance' of the tree so much that the next heavy storm would probably topple it over to the left. It already inclines that way, and——"

"There are several hundred thousand more trees like that in the Black Forest," cut in the Kaiser, "but not one other look-out to compare with this. My sincere thanks for the suggestion. I will have it carried out."

'And so,' continued Baron Y——, 'the obscuring limb was removed, and the mutilated tree, as I knew it must, went down the following winter. "My look-out now will have three hours of sunlight instead of one," the Kaiser observed gleefully when he told me about it; "I was glad to see it go."

'It was a case of one monarch against another, and as the Kaiser is resolved to brook no rival, especially where the question of his "sunlight" is concerned, I suppose the sequel was inevitable. All the same I am sorry that—that it was the monarch of the forest that had to go down. But though the tree went down,' he concluded with a grimace, tossing the magazine into my lap, 'the "Ajax" pictures still continue.'

'Wouldn't "His Place in the Sun" be even an apter title than "Ajax Defying the Lightning"?' I ventured.

'Unquestionably,' was the reply. 'I had thought of that myself. But, you see, even we Bavarians are very keen in the matter of the extension of Germany's "*übersee*" colonies, and it wouldn't do to make light of our own ambitions.'

I have set down this little story just as it was told to me, and it is only since the outbreak of the war, when the mainsprings of

German motives are revealed at Armageddon, that it has occurred to me how perfectly it resolves itself into allegory. To the world at large, but to the Briton especially, is there no suggestion in what the Kaiser *did* to the tree, which for a hundred years or more had shadowed his tardily stumbled-upon look-out, of what he *planned to do* to the Empire which he had so often intimated had crowded him out of his 'place in the sun'? With the tree he hewed off a sun-obscuring limb, and the unbalanced, mutilated remnant succumbed to the first storm that assailed it. Was not this the procedure that he reckoned upon following with the 'obscuring limbs' of the British Empire?

The foregoing instance of the extravagant vanity of the Kaiser Baron Y— told more in amusement than in censoriousness, but I recall another little story to much the same point that he related with hard eyes and the shade of a frown, as one man speaks of another who has not quite 'played the game' in sport or business. It, also, had to do with an imperial hunt.

'As you doubtless know,' he said, after telling me something of how creditably the Kaiser shot, considering his infirmity, 'a strenuous endeavour is always made on these occasions that the best game be driven up to the rifles of royalty, a custom which none of the Hohenzollerns have ever had the sporting instinct to modify in favour of even the most distinguished visitors. By some chance on the day in question, a remarkably fine boar ran unscathed the gauntlet of the imperial batteries and fell—an easy shot—to my own bullet. It was a really magnificent trophy—the brute was as high at the shoulder as a good-sized pony, and his tusks curved through fully ninety degrees more than a complete circle—and it had occurred to me at once that it was in order that I should at least *offer* to make a present of the head to my royal host. Frankly, however, I really wanted it very badly for my own hall, and I can still recall hoping that the Kaiser would "touch and remit, after the manner of kings," as Kipling puts it.'

The Baron was silent for a few moments, staring hard in front of him with the look of a man who ponders something that has rankled in his mind for years. 'Well,' he resumed presently, 'the Kaiser *did* "touch" (in the sense the Yankees use the term, I mean), but he did not "remit." When we came to group for the inevitable after-the-hunt photograph, I was dumbfounded to see a couple of the imperial huntsmen drag up my prize, not in front of me, where immemorial custom decreed it should go, but to

the feet of the Kaiser. He even had the nerve to have the photograph taken with his foot on its head. You have shot big game yourself, and you will know, therefore, that this would convey to any hunter exactly the same thing as his writing under the photograph, "I shot this boar myself."

The Baron took a long breath before resuming. 'I need not tell you how surprised and angry I was, and I will not tell you what it took all the self-control I had to keep from doing. What I *did* do, I flatter myself, would have been thoroughly efficacious in bringing home to any other man in this world the consummate meanness of the thing he had done. The moment the photograph was finished I stepped up to the Kaiser and, controlling my voice as best I could, said: "Your Majesty, I beg you will deign to accept as a humble token of my admiration of your prowess as a hunter and your courtesy as a host the fine boar which my poor rifle was fortunate to bring down to-day."

'I still think that my polite sarcasm would have cut through the armour of any other man on earth. It was impossible to mistake my meaning, and he must have known that every man there knew it was *my* boar that he had had his picture taken with and was still coolly keeping his boot upon. Possibly he decided in his own mind, then and there, that the time had come to extend the "Divine Right of the Hohenzollerns" to the hunting field. At any rate, he bowed graciously, thanked me warmly, and, pointing down to where I had stood in the picture, said he presumed it was "that little fellow with the deformed tusk."

'My head was humming from the shock of the effrontery, but I still have distinct recollection of the deliberate *sang-froid* of the Kaiser's manner as he directed someone to "mark that little boar with a twisted tusk, a gift from my good friend, Baron Y—, for mounting as a trophy." I was a potential regicide for the next week or two, but my sense of humour pulled me up in the end. For, after all, what is the use of taking seriously a man who, for the sake of tickling his insatiate vanity by having his photograph taken with his foot on the head of a bigger pig than those in front of his hunting guests, commits an act that, were he anything less than an Emperor, would stamp him with every one of them as an out-and-out bounder? The memory of the thing makes me "see red" a bit even to-day if I let my mind dwell on it at all, but mingling with my resentment and mortification there is always a sort of sneaking admiration for the way the Kaiser (as the Yankees

say) "got away with the goods." The Hohenzollern—the trait is as evident in the Crown Prince as it is in his father—will always go forward instead of backward when it comes to being confronted with the consequences of either their bluffs or their breaks, and it is about time that the people in Germany, as well as the people outside of Germany, got this fact well in mind when dealing with them.'

These words were spoken before the Kaiser backed down when his Agadir bluff was called, but, generally speaking, I think the action of both father and son since then has been eloquent vindication of their truth.

Another noble German of my acquaintance who had at one time been on terms of exceptional intimacy with the Kaiser was the wealthy and distinguished Baron von K——, who, in the two decades previous to the outbreak of the war, had divided his time about equally between his ancestral castle on the Rhine and a great Northern California ranch brought him by his wealthy American wife. I met him first at a house-party in Honolulu about ten years ago, and at that time he appeared to take considerable pride in his friendship with the Kaiser, of whom he was wont to speak often and sympathetically. Since then I have encountered him, now in America, now in Europe, on an average of once a year, and on each succeeding occasion I noticed a decreasing warmth on his part, not so much for Germany and the Germans, for whom he still expressed great affection, but rather toward the Kaiser and his policies. It must have been fully seven years ago that he told me, at the Lotus Club in New York, that the mad race of armaments in which Germany was setting the pace for the rest of Europe could only end in one way—a great war in which his country would run a risk of losing far more than it had any chance of winning.

It was not long after this that I heard that Baron von K—— had returned hurriedly and unexpectedly from Germany to America, taking with him his two sons who had been at school there. I never learned exactly what the trouble was, but a friend of his told me that it had some connection with an effort that had been made to induce the youngsters to become German subjects and join the army, flattering prospects in which were held out to them. Von K—— is said to have declared that the boys should never be allowed to set foot in Germany again. Whether this latter statement is true or not, it is a fact that neither of the lads has ever since crossed the Atlantic, and that both are now at Harvard.

In the spring of 1911 von K—— cut short what was to have been a fortnight's business trip to Germany to one of four days, the change in plan, as I have since learned, being due to an 'invitation' (an euphemism for a command) from the Kaiser to invest a huge sum of money in one of his armament concerns, great extensions in which were contemplated. Von K—— refused point-blank, rushed through his business, and took the first boat for New York. I did not see him until the following year, but friends told me that for a couple of months after his return to California he absolutely refused to talk of Germany or of German affairs even with his intimates.

This silence was dramatically broken in the smoking-room of the Union League Club, San Francisco, on the evening when the news came that the Kaiser had sent the gunboat 'Panther' to Agadir as a trump card for the game he was playing for the control of Morocco. Von K—— was frowning over his paper when an American friend came up, clapped him on the shoulder, and exclaimed: 'The Baron is in close touch with the Kaiser; perhaps he can tell us what "The Mailed Fist" is punching at in North Africa.'

What von K—— said regarding the allegation that he was in close touch with the Kaiser was not stated in words that even the San Francisco papers (whose 'news vultures' had pounced upon the incident within an hour) felt able to report verbatim the following morning, but his 'Mailed Fist' *mot* went from California to Maine in the next twelve hours, and even to-day is still freely quoted whenever the question of the War Lord's mentality is the subject of discussion.

'Mailed vist!' snorted the Baron, whose English has never climbed entirely out of his throat; 'Vell, berhabst dey haas mailed his vist, but, by Gott, dey haas neffer mailed his prain.' Then, as an afterthought, 'Or maype, if dey haas mailed his prain, der bostmann haas forgodt it to deliffer.'

I saw Baron von K—— in San Francisco—encountered him beaming over the sculptures in the Italian Building at the Panama-Pacific Exposition—but was unable to draw him into any discussion of Germany and the war. He did, however, tell me that his German estates were for sale, that he never expected to return there again, and that—the day after Belgium was invaded—he had applied for his first papers of American citizenship.

THE TUTOR'S STORY.¹

BY THE LATE CHARLES KINGSLEY,
REVISED AND COMPLETED BY HIS DAUGHTER, LUCAS MALET.

CHAPTER XXX.

THAT was the first of many days—for by both Braithwaite's and Nellie's request I stayed on at Westrea until nearly the end of the vacation—of sweet but very searching experience. If I played with fire it was a purifying fire surely, burning away the baser metal and leaving whatever of gold might be in me free of dross.

Not that I say this boastfully—who am I, indeed, to boast?—but humbly and thankfully, knowing I passed through an ordeal from which—while the animal man cowered and shrank, crying aloud, aye, and with tears of agony, to be spared—the spiritual man drew strength and rose, in God's mercy, to greater fulness of life. For I learned very much, and that at first hand, by personal experiment, not by hearsay merely or, parrot-like, by rote. Learned the truth of the apostle's dictum, that although 'all things are lawful,' yet, for some of us, many things, however good in themselves or good for others, are 'not expedient.' Learned, too, the value of the second best, learned to accept the lower place. Learned to rejoice in friendship, since the greater joys of love were denied me, schooling myself to play a brother's part; play it fearlessly and, as I trust, unselfishly, watchful that neither by word, or deed, or even by look, I overstepped the limit I had set myself and forfeited the trust and faith Nellie reposed in me.

To do this was no easy matter. At moments, I own, the springs of courage and resolution ran perilously dry. Then I would go away by myself for a time; and—why should I hesitate to tell it?—pray, wrestle in prayer, for self-mastery which, with that wrestling, came. For if we are honest with ourselves and with Him, disdaining self-pity and self-excuse, Almighty God is very safe to fulfil His part of the bargain. This, also, I learned, during those sweet and searching days at Westrea, beyond all question of doubt.

I rode or drove with Braithwaite about the neighbouring

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country. Walked with him over his farm. Talked with him endlessly of his agricultural schemes and improvements. Talked with him about public events, too, and about politics. Only once or twice was Hartover, or Hover, mentioned; and then, I observed, his tone took on a certain bitterness. He had been up to Yorkshire on business a little prior to my visit, had happened to run across Warcop—aged and sad, so he told me. But my old friend laid aside much of his customary caution, it appeared, on hearing Braithwaite expected shortly to see me, and bade him tell me things were not well at Hover.

‘What he actually knows, what he only suspects, I could not quite discover,’ Braithwaite went on. ‘But I gathered the Countess has been up to queer tricks. As to that business, now, of the Italian rascal going off with the plate—you heard of it?—well, it looks uncommonly as though my lady was in no haste to have him laid by the heels—bamboozled the police, as she bamboozled pretty well every unlucky wretch she comes across, until he had time to make good his escape.’

‘And the Colonel?’ I asked.

‘A dark horse. Connived at the fellow’s escape, too, I am inclined to think. Marsigli knew too much of the family goings-on, and, if he was caught, was pretty sure to blab in revenge. I am not given to troubling myself about the unsavoury doings of great folks, Brownlow. They had a short way with aristocratic heads during the French Revolution at the end of last century, and I am not altogether sure they weren’t right. But for my poor Nellie’s sake, I should never give that Longmoor faction a second thought. As it is I have been obliged to think about them, and I believe the plain English of the whole affair is that the Colonel and my lady have been on better terms than they should be for many years past. What she wants is a second Lord Longmoor as husband, and the money, and the property, and—a son of her own to inherit it. An ugly accusation? Yes. But can you spell out the mystery any better way than that?’

I did not know that I could, and told him so. There the conversation dropped, while my mind went back to the letter Nellie had shown me.—It was a devilish action of Fédore’s, I thought, the mark of a base, cruel nature, capable—the last sin—of trampling on the fallen. And yet might it not have been dictated by the pardonable desire to secure her prize for herself, to prevent pursuit, inquiry, scandal, perhaps fresh misery for Nellie? There are two

sides, two explanations, of every human act ; and the charitable one is just as rational, often more so, than the uncharitable. If she stated her case somewhat coarsely, was she not low-bred, ill-taught, excited by success ?

Thus did I argue with myself, trying to excuse the woman, lest I should let anger get the upper hand of reason and judgment. But what was her relation to Marsigli ? This it was which really mattered, which was of lasting moment. And about this I must be silent, be cool and prudent. At present I could take no action. I must wait on events.

Meanwhile each day brought me a closer acquaintance with, and respect for, Nellie's character ; the liveliness of her intelligence, and justness of her taste. And to it, the intellectual side of her nature, I made my appeal, trying to take her mind off personal matters and interest her in literature and thought. On warm mornings, her household duties finished, she would bring her needlework out to a sheltered spot in the garden, where the high red-brick wall formed an angle with the house front ; and sitting there, the flowers, the brimming water, the gently upward sloping grass-land and avenue of oaks before us, I would read aloud to her from her favourite authors or introduce her to books she had not yet read. On chill evenings we would sit beside the wood fire in the hall, while Braithwaite was busy with the newspaper or accounts, and read till the dying twilight obliged her to rise and light the lamp. Much of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, along with Pope's rendering of the *Iliad*, Hazlitt's *Lectures* and Lamb's *Essays*, we studied thus. Shelley, save for a few of the lyrics, we avoided by tacit consent ; and Byron likewise, with the exception of certain portions of '*Childe Harold*' ; the heroic rather than the sentimental note seeming safest—though from different causes—to us both.

Often I would illustrate our reading by telling her about the authors, the places, or the period with which it dealt, to see her hands drop in her lap, her face grow bright, her manner animated, as she listened and questioned me—argued a little too, if she differed from my opinion. Sometimes she laughed with frank enjoyment at some merry tale or novel idea. And then I was indeed rewarded—only too well rewarded. For her laughter was exquisite to me, both in sound and in token of—were it but momentary—lightness of heart.

After that first morning in the Orchard Close, we rarely

mentioned the dear boy. I felt nothing could be gained by leading the conversation in his direction. If it would afford her relief, if she wanted to speak, she knew by now, I felt, she could do so without embarrassment or fear of misunderstanding on my part. But it was not until the afternoon of the day preceding my return to Cambridge that we had any prolonged talk on the subject.

Braithwaite, I remember, had driven over to Thetford upon business; and, at Nellie's request, I walked with her to the village, so that she might show me the fine old monuments and brasses in the parish church.

Coming back across the fields, we lingered a little, watching the loveliness of the early May sunset. For, looking westward, all the land lay drenched in golden haze, which—obliterating the horizon line—faded upward into a faint golden-green sky, across which long webs were drawn of rose and grey. Out of the sunset a soft wind blew; full, as it seemed, of memory and wistful invitation to—well—I know not what. But either that wind or consciousness of our parting on the morrow moved Nellie to open her heart to me more freely than ever before.

'Dear Mr. Brownlow,' she said, her eyes still fixed on that loveliness of sunset—'I want to thank you now, while we are still alone, for all you have done for me. You have, indeed, been a good physician, and I want you to know how much better I am since you came—stronger, and more at peace. I promise you I will do my utmost to keep the ground I have gained, and not fall back into the unworthy state of mind out of which you have brought me. I do not say I am cured.'

She looked up at me, smiling.

'I do not think you would ask that of me. I have no wish to be—I should, I think, be ashamed to be cured of—of my love. For it would make what was most beautiful seem unreal and untrue. But I am resigned to all—almost all—which has happened. I no longer kick against the pricks, or ask to have things otherwise. I shall not let it make me sour or envious—thanks to you.'

And as she spoke I read in her dear eyes a depth of innocent and trustful affection, which was almost more than I could endure.

'I have come to a better frame of mind,' she said. 'It will last. It shall last, I promise you.'

'Then all is well,' I answered, haltingly.

But as I spoke her expression changed. She walked forward along the field path, looking upon the ground.

'Yes, all—I suppose—is well,' she repeated. 'All except one thing—that hurts still.'

'And what is that one thing?'

I thought I knew. If I was right, I had a remedy at hand—a desperate one, perhaps, but she was firm enough to bear it now.

'I always felt how little I had to offer, as against his position, his gifts, and all the attractions of his life at Hover, and still more his life in town. The wonder was he should ever have found me worth caring for at all. But I thought his nature was deeper and more constant, and it hurts—it must always hurt—that he should have forgotten so soon and so entirely as she—his wife—says he has.'

'There she lied. He has not forgotten,' I answered. 'Here are Hartover's own words.'

And I gave her the letter I received after my visit to Chelsea. Let her learn the truth, the whole truth, as from his own lips—learn the best and the worst of him, and so meet whatever the future might bring with open eyes.

Some twenty yards ahead a stile and gate divided the field of spring wheat we were crossing from the pasture beyond. I must leave Nellie to herself. So I went on and stood, leaning my elbows on the top bar of the gate.

Below, in the hollow, the red roofs and chimneys of Westrea and a glint of water showed through the veil of golden haze. An abode of peace, of those wholesome fruitful industries which link man to mother-earth and all her ancient mysteries of the seasons, of seed-time and harvest, rain and shine. How far away in purpose and sentiment from the gaudy world of fashion, of artificial excitement, intrigue and acrimonious rivalries, to which my poor boy, Hartover, now belonged! Yes, and therefore, since here her lot was cast, it was well Nellie should know the best and worst of him, his weakness and his fine instincts alike; because—because—in the back of my mind was a conviction, irrational, unfounded, very foolish perhaps, but at this moment absolute, that the end was not yet. And that, in the end, by ways which I knew not, once again Nellie would find Hartover, and Hartover would find Nellie, and finding her would find rest to his soul, salvation to his wayward nature, and thus escape the fate of Alcibiades, which I had always so dreaded for him, and prove

worthy of his high station, his great possessions, his singular beauty, charm and talent, even yet.

For five minutes, nearly ten minutes, while the gold faded to grey, I waited, and Nellie gave no sign. I began to grow nervous and question the wisdom of my own action. To her, pure and high-minded as she was, would this revelation of dissipation and hard-living prove too painful, would she turn from it in anger and disgust? Had I betrayed my trust, been disloyal to the dear boy in letting her see his confession? I bowed my head upon my hands. Fool, fool, thus to rush in where angels might truly fear to tread!

Then quick, light footsteps behind me—the rustle of a woman's dress. And as, fearful and humiliated, I, turning, looked up, Nellie's eyes like stars, her face pale but glorious in its exaltation and triumphant tenderness.

'Dear good physician,' she said, 'I am really cured at last—not of, but by love. All that seemed spoilt and lost is given back. How can I thank you enough? I can bear to be away from him, bear to give him up, now that I know he really cared for me, really suffered in leaving me. I can even forgive her, though she has been cruel and insolent, because she went to him in his trouble and helped to save his life. And I understand why he married her—it was chivalrous and generous on his part. It places him higher in my estimation. I can admire him in that too.'

I gazed at her, dazzled, enchanted, wondering. And then—shame, thrice shame to me after all my struggles, resolutions, prayers—the devil of envy raised its evil head, of bitterness against the rich man, who with all his gold and precious stones, his flocks and herds, must yet steal the poor man's one jewel, one little ewe lamb.

'Have you read all the letter—read that part in which he speaks of his first months in London?' I asked.

For an instant she looked at me without comprehension, her eyebrows drawn together, in evident question and surprise. Then the tension relaxed. Gently and sweetly she laughed.

'Ah! yes,' she said. 'I know. He grew reckless—he did wrong. But—but, dear Mr. Brownlow—is it wicked of me?—I cannot condemn him for that—because it was his love for me which drove him to it. He tells you so himself. I suppose I ought to be shocked—I will try to be—presently—if you say I ought. But not just yet—please not just yet.'

‘Neither now nor presently,’ I answered, conscience-stricken and ashamed. ‘You know far better than I what is right. Follow your own heart.’

I opened the gate, and stood back for her to pass. As she did so she paused.

‘You are displeased with me,’ she said. ‘Yet why? Why did you let me read his letter, except to comfort me and make me happy by showing me he was not to blame?’

Why indeed? She well might ask. And how was I to answer without still further betraying my trust—my trust to her, this time, since I had sworn to be to her as a brother and let no hint of my own feelings disturb the serenity of our intercourse?

So I replied, I am afraid clumsily enough—

‘You are mistaken. And to show you how little I am displeased I beg you to keep this letter, in exchange for the one you gave me to keep. You may like to read it through again, from time to time.’

I held it out. And for an instant she hesitated, her eyes fixed upon the writing, upon the paper, as though these actual and material things were precious in her sight. Then she put her hands behind her and shook her head.

‘No—better not. It is not necessary,’ she said with a child-like gravity. Her whole attitude just now was curiously simple and childlike. ‘I have every word of it by heart already, dear Mr. Brownlow. I shall remember every word—always.’

And for a while we walked on in silence, side by side, beneath the dying sunset. Upon the hump-backed bridge spanning the stream Nellie stopped.

‘One thing more, good physician,’ she said, very gently. ‘I am cut off from him for—for ever by his marriage. But you can watch over him and care for his welfare still. You will do so?’

‘Before God—yes,’ I answered.

‘And, sometimes, you will let me hear, you will come and tell me about him?’

‘Again—yes—before God.’

And I smiled to myself, bowing my head. Oh! the magnificent and relentless egoism of love!—But she should have this since she asked it; this and more than this. Plans began to form in my mind, a determination to make sure, whatever it might cost me, about this same marriage of Hartover’s. I would devote

myself to an inquiry, pursue it carefully, prudently ; but pursue it regardless of time, regardless of money—such money as, by economy and hard work, I could command. For was not such an inquiry part, and an integral one, of the pledge to watch over Hartover and care for his welfare which I had so recently and solemnly given her ? Undoubtedly it was.

‘Thank you,’ she said. Then after a pause, ‘I wonder why you are so kind to me ? Sometimes I am almost afraid of your kindness, lest it should make me selfish and conceited, make me think too highly of myself. Indeed I will try better to deserve it. I will read. I will improve my mind, so as to be more worthy of your society and teaching, when you come again.—But, Mr. Brownlow, I have never kept anything from my father until now. Is it deceitful of me not to tell him of these two letters ? They would anger and vex him ; and he has been so much happier and like his old self since you have been with us. I hate to disturb him and open up the past.’

‘I think you are, at least, justified in waiting for a time before telling him,’ I faltered.

For my poor head was spinning, and I had much ado to collect my wits. She would read, improve herself, be more worthy of my teaching when I came again, forsooth !—Ah ! Nellie, Nellie, that I must listen with unmoved pedagogic countenance, that I must give you impersonal and sage advice, out of a broken heart !—

‘Yes, wait,’ I repeated. ‘Later your course of action may be made clearer, and you may have an opportunity of speaking without causing him annoyance or distress. You are not disobeying his orders, in any case.’

‘Thank you,’ she said again. ‘See, the lamps are lit. My father must be home and we are late. Oh ! how I wish you were not going away to-morrow. He will miss you, we shall all miss you so badly.’

I did not sleep much that night.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ancient postboy drove out to Westrea next morning, and conveyed me and my impedimenta back to Cambridge.

The journey was a silent one, I being as little disposed for

conversation as he. My thoughts were not very cheerful. Yet what had I, after all, to make a poor mouth about? I had asked to know my own mind, and arrive at a definite decision concerning certain matters closely affecting my future. Now I knew it very thoroughly; and, as to those matters, had decided once and for all. It only remained for me to acquaint my kind old friend, the Master, with that decision as tactfully and delicately as might be. But how should I acquit myself? And how would he take it? And how far should I be compelled to speak of Hartover and Nellie, and of my own relation to both, to make my meaning clear? For what a tangle it all was—a tangle almost humorous, though almost tragic too, as such human tangles mostly are! Well, I supposed I must stick to my old method of blunt truth-telling, leaving the event to my Maker, who, having created that strange anomaly, the human heart, must surely know how best to deal with its manifold needs and vagaries!

So far then, it was, after all, fairly plain sailing. But, unfortunately, these thoughts were not the only thing which troubled me.

For I felt as well as thought; and feeling is more dangerous than thought because at once more intimate and more intangible. A great emptiness filled—for emptiness can fill, just as silence can shout, and that hideously—not only my own soul but, as it seemed, all Nature around me. The land was empty, the sky empty. An east-wind blight spread abroad, taking all colour out of the landscape and warmth out of the sunshine. Just so had my parting with Nellie cast a blight over me, taking the colour and warmth out of my life. For I had been with her long enough for her presence, the sound of her voice, and constant sight of her to become a habit. How terribly I missed, and should continue to miss, her—not only in great matters but in small, in all the pleasant, trivial, friendly incidents of every day!

After the freshness and spotless cleanliness of Westrea, my college rooms—fond though I was of them—looked dingy and uncared for, as is too often the way of an exclusively masculine dwelling-place. The men had not come up yet, which spared me the annoyance of Halidane's neighbourhood for the moment. Still I felt the depressing lack of life and movement throughout the college buildings and quadrangles. Cambridge was asleep—a dull and dismal sleep, as it struck me. The Master, I found, was back and at the Lodge once more; but, since only a portion of the house was ready for habitation, Mrs. Dynevor and her daughters

would remain at Bath for some weeks longer. This I was glad to hear, as it promised to simplify my rather awkward task.

I called at the Lodge the same evening, to be received by the Master with his usual cordiality. He invited me to stay and dine, admitting he felt somewhat lonely without his ladies in the still partially dismantled house.

'Unlike the three children in the Babylonian furnace, the smell of fire is very much upon it still,' he said. 'Signs and odours of destruction meet me at every turn. I dare say in the end—for I have an excellent architect—we shall make a more comfortable and certainly more sanitary place of it than ever before; but the continuity is broken, much history and many a tradition lost for good. I am only heartily glad you are not among the latter, Brownlow. It was a very near thing.'

Whether this was intended to give me an opening for explanation, I could not say. In any case I did not choose to take advantage of it, preferring to explain at my own time and in my own way.

We talked on general subjects for a while. But at the end of dinner, when the butler left the room, he said, eyeing me with a twinkle—

'It was a pity you could not manage to meet us at Bath, Brownlow, for you would have found some old friends there. One of whom, a very splendid personage by the same token, made many gracious inquiries after you—put me through the longer catechism in respect of you, and put my sister and nieces through it also, I understand.'

'Old friends?' I asked, considerably puzzled both by his words and manner.

'You had not heard, then, any more than I, that Lord Longmoor has settled permanently at Bath?'

I assured him I had not.

'Yes—and under sad enough circumstances,' he went on, with a change of tone. 'Poor gentleman, he and those about him have cried wolf for so many years that I, for one, had grown sceptical regarding his ailments. But what of constitution he ever possessed has been undermined by coddling and dosing. I was admitted once or twice, and was, I own, most painfully impressed by his appearance and by his state of mind—religious mania, or something alarmingly akin to it, and that of at once the most abject and arrogant sort.'

I was greatly shocked by this news, and said so.

'What is being done?' I asked.

'Everything that common sense would forbid, in my opinion. He is surrounded by an army of obsequious servants and rapacious medical and religious quacks, all and each busy to secure their private advantage while fooling him, poor soul, to the top of his bent. Our hopeful convert and gownsman Halidane had joined the throng, so I heard, but fled at my approach. Where the carcass is, there the vultures are gathered together—a repulsive and odious sight, showing the case of Dives may after all be hardly less miserable than that of Lazarus.'

The Master paused.

'Lady Longmoor is there too; and heaven forgive me, Brownlow,' he added, 'I could not but wonder what sentiments that remarkably fair lady really entertains towards her lord. She confided in me in the most charming manner; yet, honestly, I knew less what to think and believe, knew less how the land really lay, after receiving those confidences than before.'

In spite of myself I was amused. For could I not picture her Magnificence and my good kind old Master in solemn conclave? Picture the arts and graces let loose on him, the touching appeals, admissions, protests; the disarming innocence of glance and gesture, along with flashes of naughty laughter, beneath the black-fringed eyelids, in the demurely downcast eyes.

'Her ladyship's communications are not always easy to interpret. They are not always intended to enlighten—perhaps,' I ventured.

'Then you, too, have been honoured?'

'I have.'

He chuckled.

But, in my case, amusement speedily gave place to sober reflection. For if Lord Longmoor was in so critical a condition, dying possibly, what an immense change in Hartover's position this entailed! All my fears for the dear boy reawakened. What means might not be taken to embroil him with his father, at this critical moment, to injure and dispossess him! Particularly did I dislike the fact that Halidane had been in attendance. I questioned the Master anxiously.

'Ah! there you have me, Brownlow,' he replied. 'Lord Hartover is a point upon which my lady's confidences proved peculiarly obscure. She spoke of her "dear George" with a great

show of affection, deploring that the festivities in celebration of his coming of age next month must be postponed. She had so counted on seeing both you and me at Hover then, she declared. Deploring, also '—and he looked rather hard at me, I thought, across the corner of the dinner table over the row of decanters, as he spoke—'deploring also an unfortunate disposition in her stepson to become enamoured of young women very much beneath him in the social scale. She gave me to understand both she and his father had been caused much annoyance and trouble by more than one affair of this sort. Yet I could not help fancying she sought information, just then, rather than offered it. I had a notion—I may have been mistaken—she was doing her best to pump me and find out whether I had heard anything from you upon the subject of these amatory escapades. Come, Brownlow—for my instruction, not for hers—can you fill in the gaps?'

I hesitated. Had the right moment come for explanation? I believed that it had. And so, as plainly and briefly as I could, I told him the whole story. I kept back nothing—why should I? There was nothing to be ashamed of, though somewhat to grieve over, and much to regret. I told him of Nellie, of Fédore; of Hartover's love, Hartover's marriage. I told him of my own love.

For a while he remained silent. Then, laying his hand on my shoulder, as I sat, my elbows upon the table, my face buried in my hands—

'My poor fellow, my poor fellow—I had no notion of all this,' he said. 'So this is the upshot of your two years at Hover. I sent you out to make your fortune, and you found your fate. Well—well—things are as they are; but I do not deny that recently I had formed very different plans for you.'

'Do not think me presumptuous, sir, if I answer I feared as much. And that is my reason for telling you what I have told no other human being—what, indeed, I had hoped to keep locked inviolably in my own breast as long as I live.'

Something in my tone or in my narrative must have stirred him deeply, for he rose and took a turn up and down the room, as though with difficulty retaining his composure. For my part, I own, I felt broken, carried out of myself. It had been searching work, dislocating work, to lay bare my innermost heart thus. But only so, as I judged, could the mention of Alice Dynevor's name be avoided between us. It was better to sacrifice myself,

if by so doing I could at once spare her and arrive at a clear understanding. Of this I was glad. I think the Master was glad too ; for, his rather agitated walk ended, he stood beside me and spoke most kindly.

'Your secret is perfectly safe with me, Brownlow, rest assured. I give you my word I will never reveal it. You have behaved honourably and high-mindedly throughout. Your conduct commands my respect and admiration,—though I could wish some matters had turned out otherwise. But now as to this marriage—real or supposed—of poor Hartover's and all the ugly plotting of which, I fear with you, he is the victim. I do not think I can find it in my conscience to stand by, or encourage you to stand by, with folded hands.'

'That is exactly what I was coming to, sir,' I said, choking down alike my thanks and my emotion. 'If, as you inform me, Lord Longmoor's health is so precarious, the poor dear boy's future must not be left to chance.'

'No, no,' he answered warmly. 'His foes, I fear, are very literally of his own household. If this woman is legally his wife, we, as his friends, are called upon to stand by the marriage and, on grounds of public policy, make the best of what, I admit, strikes me as a very bad business. If she is not legally his wife, if there is any flaw in the marriage, we must take means to establish the fact of that flaw and set him free. Whether he is grateful to us for our self-imposed labours affects our duty neither one way nor the other at this stage of the proceedings. But, should she prove the unscrupulous person I take her to be, he will very certainly thank us in the end. And now, Brownlow, it occurs to me the sooner we move in all this the better. There is no time to be lost.'

He gave me reasons for his opinion, in which I fully agreed ; and we sat talking far into the night, with the result that within a fortnight I travelled, first to Yorkshire, and then up to town.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ABOUT my Yorkshire journey it is unnecessary to say much. I saw Hover once more, stately as ever, but lifeless. The great house shut up, its many treasures swathed in dust sheets and

brown paper. When it would be opened again none knew. Probably Colonel Esdaile would bring some gentlemen down in August for grouse-shooting, or for covert-shooting in October. He would hunt there during the winter.—The Colonel, always and only the Colonel, as man in possession ?

I said as much to Warcop—to whom my visit was made—sitting before the empty stove in that queer sanctum of his, hung round with prints and spoils of the stud-farm and the chase. Whereupon he stuck out his bulldog under-jaw and mournfully shook his big grizzled head.

Yes, he answered, that was pretty well what it all came to. Would to God it did not!—always and only Colonel Jack at Hover in these days. And my lord lay a-dying, so they said, at Bath ; and my young lord gave no sign. And her ladyship flitted in, like some great bright-painted butterfly, for a day and a night. Looked round the stables and gardens with a laugh, hanging on the Colonel's arm, and flitted off again, as gay as you please, to London or Bath, or Old Nick knew where ; while Colonel Jack, with a face like thunder and a temper like tinder, cursed the very guts out of anyone unlucky enough to cross his path for full twenty-four hours afterwards. Colonel Esdaile was a changed man, as I gathered ; his swaggering manner and jovial good-humour a thing of the past, save at rare intervals or when her ladyship happened to be about.

All of which was bad hearing. The more so as, without going all lengths with Braithwaite in his condemnation of our hereditary nobility, I believed then—and believe firmly still—that if a great nobleman, or great landowner, is to justify his position—aye, and his very existence—he must live on his estate, keep in close touch with, and hold himself directly responsible for the welfare of, all ranks of its population—labourers, artisans, rent-payers great and small, alike. The middle-man, however just or able an administrator, introduces, and must always introduce, a cold-blooded, mechanical relation as between landlord and tenant, employer and employed. And, now listening to Warcop's lament, I trembled lest the curse of absenteeism—which during recent years has worked such havoc of class hatred and disaffection in Ireland—should set its evil mark upon this English country-side.

In this connection it was inevitable that memories of my former dreams and ambitions for Hover should come back to me with a bitter sense of failure and of regret. Dreams and ambitions of so

educating and training my dear pupil as to make him an ideal landowner, an ideal nobleman, to whom no corner of his vast possessions, the lives lived and work done there, would be a matter of indifference; but who would accept and obey the divinely ordained law of rulership and ownership which reminds us every privilege carries with it a corresponding obligation, and that the highest duty of him who governs is to serve.

Where had all those fair dreams and ambitions departed now? Were they for ever undone and dissipated? It seemed so, alas! Yet who could tell? Had I not promised Nellie, and that in some sort against my dearest interests, to watch over Hartover to the best of my power, and care for him still? And if a poor faulty human creature, such as I, could be faithful, how much more God, his Maker! Yes, I would set my hope, both for him and for Hover, firmly there, black though things looked at present. For Almighty God, loving him infinitely more than I—much though I loved him—would surely find means for his redemption, and, notwithstanding his many temptations, still make for him a way of escape.

And with that I turned my mind resolutely to the practical inquiry which had brought me north, questioning Warcop concerning the disappearance of Marsigli and the theft, with which he stood charged, of jewels and of plate.

Warcop's first words in reply, I own, set my heart beating.

'Best ask French Mamzelle, sir,' he said, with a snarl. 'For, as sure as my name's Jesse Warcop, she'd the main finger in that pie. Picked out t' fattest o' the plums for herself, too, and fathered the job upon Marsigli to rid herself of the fellow.'

'To rid herself of him?'

'Od, an' why not? So long as ye were here wi' us, sir, what she'd set her mind to have was out of her reach. But, you safe gone, she'd na more stomach for my lord's Italian butler, bless you—must fly at higher game than that.'

'Lord Hartover?'

'And who else? Eh! but she's a canny one; none of your hot-heads, rushing into a thing afore they've fairly planned it. She'd her plan pat enough. Laid her train or ever she struck a match; waited till she kenned it was all over between t' dear lad and Braithwaite's lass. Had Marsigli muzzled, seeing that to tell on her was to tell on himself. And others, that should ha' shown her up, durstn't do it, lest she opened her mouth and

set scandal yelping after them. So she'd a muzzle onto them too, and could afford to laugh t' whole lot in the face—upstairs as well as down—and follow her own fancy.'

He ruminated, chewing viciously at the straw he carried in his mouth.

'And, as the talk goes, she's followed it to a finish,' he added, 'and fixed her devil she-kite's claws in my young lord, poor dear lad, safe enough. Is the talk true, sir?'

I answered, sadly, I feared it was so; but that, as some method might still possibly be found of unfixing those same kite's claws, I had come in search of any information he could give.

'Then you mean to put up a fight, sir?' he said, his jaw hard and his eyes bright. 'For all your colleging and your black coat, you're o' the same kidney as when ye rode t' little brown horse across the fells and saved t' pack.'

And therewith he settled down to recount all he had puzzled out, all he believed and thought. Inferential rather than circumstantial, this, alas! for the most part; yet to me valuable, from the man's caution, honesty, power of close observation, shrewd intelligence and mother-wit. In his opinion the theft had been carried out at Fédore's instigation, and upon her undertaking to join Marsigli as soon as it was accomplished, and fly with him to his native city of Milan. Having thus involved the Italian—whose long-standing passion for, and jealousy of her, were matters of common knowledge among the servants, Warcop said—she evidently played him false, although covering his escape by putting the police on a wrong scent. Where was he now? In England, Warcop opined, probably hiding in London, still hoping to induce Fédore to redeem her promise. Were the two man and wife? Over that Warcop shook his head. Who could say, save the two themselves? Yet, if they were, there must needs be a record of the marriage, which would have taken place during the period of my tutorship at Hover, at some time when her ladyship was in Grosvenor Square.

Here, at last, I had a definite starting-point. For the church could be found, the clergyman who performed the ceremony could be found, always supposing any such ceremony had really taken place.

I returned to Cambridge to talk everything over with the Master; and subsequently journeyed up to town, where, under

seal of the strictest secrecy, I placed matters in the hands of Inspector Lavender, of the Detective Police. He must find the church, the clergyman—above all, must find Marsigli.—This was a desperate game to play. I knew it. Would the dear boy ever forgive me for interfering in his affairs thus? I knew not. But I did know it had to be risked both for his fortune and his honour's sake. Further, was I not bound by my word solemnly given to Nellie? Still more, then, had it to be done for my own oath's sake.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AND now we were well on into the May term. The noble elms towers of dense and solid green; lilac and laburnum giving place to roses in the Fellows' Garden; and the river, a little shrunk by the summer heat, slipping past smooth lawns and beneath the weeping willows' graceful shade with truly academic deliberation and repose.

Never had I enjoyed my daily work so much, or met with so hearty and intelligent a response. An excellent set of men were in college that year; gentlemanlike, eager to learn, in some cases notably clever, in almost all agreeable to deal with. My popularity—enhanced by that episode of the fire at the Master's Lodge—was great. Why should I hesitate to say so, since thankfulness rather than vanity did, I can honestly affirm, fill my heart? I had arranged to take a reading party to North Wales during the long vacation, and to this I looked forward as a new and interesting experience. Halidane, moreover, for cause unknown, had ceased from troubling me. Ever since his return, at the beginning of term, he had worn a somewhat hang-dog look; and, though almost cringingly civil when we chanced to meet, appeared, as I thought, to shun rather than seek my society. What had happened to the fellow? Had the change in his demeanour any connection with the Master's visit to his 'sainted patron,' Lord Longmoor, at Bath? I did not know, nor did I greatly care, so long as I continued to be relieved of his officious and unsavoury attentions.

And so, taking things all round, it seemed to me, just now, the lines had after all fallen to me in pleasant places. Temptation had been resisted, difficulties overcome, honour—and my conscience

—satisfied. If much had been denied, yet much remained—sufficient, and more than sufficient, to make life a gift, not only good but glad—though after, perhaps, a somewhat serious pattern.

Then came an afternoon the events of which stand out very forcibly in my memory. They marked a turning-point; a parting of the ways, abrupt as it was unexpected.

For, neglecting alike the attractions of the glorious weather and of 'the boats'—it was during the June races—I stayed in my rooms to look through a set of mathematical papers. Some pleased me by their ability. Others amused—or irritated—me by their blunders. Heavens, what thick heads some of those youngsters had! After about an hour's work, lulled by the stillness and the sunny warmth—droning of bees in the clematis below my window, chippering cries and glancing flight of swallows back and forth to their nests under the parapet above—I laid aside the papers, and, leaning back in my chair, sank into a brown study.

The morning's post had brought me a brief communication from Lavender, the detective. After weeks of silent pursuit he had reason to believe he was on Marsigli's track at last. My own sensations in face of this announcement surprised me a little. By all rules of the game I should of course have felt unalloyed gratification. But did I really feel that? With a movement of shame, I was obliged to confess I did not. For a certain moral indolence had overtaken me. I was established in a routine from which I had no wish to break away. My college work, into which I threw myself at first mainly as a refuge from haunting desires and disturbing thoughts, had become an end in itself. It engrossed me. I found it restful—in that, while making small demand on my emotions, it gave scope for such talents, whether intellectual or practical, as I possessed. I found it exhilarating to deal with these young men, in the first flush of their mental powers, to—in some measure at all events—form their minds, influence their conduct and their thought. It was delightful, moreover, to have time and opportunity for private study; to read books, and ever more books. The scholar's life, the life of the university, held me as never before. Hence this obtrusion of Lavender, hunter of crime and of criminals, this obtrusion of wretched Marsigli, the absconding Italian butler, were, to be honest, displeasing rather than welcome. I cried off further demands upon my energies in the direction of conflict and adventure. Leave the student

to his library, the teacher to his lecture-room, unvexed by the passions and tumult of the world without.

In fastidious repulsion, in something, heaven forgive me, approaching disgust, I turned away from both thief and thief-catcher, all they were and all they stood for, as beneath my notice, common and unclean. Almost angrily I prayed to be let alone, let be. Prayed no fresh exertion might be required of me; but that I might pursue my course, as a comfortable, well-read, well-fed Cambridge don, in security and peace.

And, mercifully, my lazy prayer was not heard, not answered; or, more truly, was both heard and answered, though in a manner conspicuously the reverse of my intention in offering it.

For, as I mused thus, the calm of the summer afternoon was disturbed by a sudden loud knocking at my door. The door was flung open. On the threshold a man stood. No learned brother fellow, no ordinary gownsman; but, with his pride of bearing, his air of fashion, the finest young fine gentleman I had ever seen—in long drab driving coat, smartly outstanding from the waist, and white top hat with rakish up-curved brim.

For an instant I gazed in stupid amazement. Then, as the door closed behind him and he came from out the shadow, I sprang to my feet and ran forward, with a cry. And, almost before I knew what was happening, his two hands gripped my shoulders, and he backed me into the full light of the window, holding me away from him at arms' length and looking down into my face. He was a good half head taller than I.

'Dearest Brownlow—my dear old man, my dear old man,' he repeated, and his grip tightened while his voice was tender as a girl's.

Then, while I stammered in my excitement and surprise, he gave a naughty little laugh.

'Oh! I am no ghost,' he said. 'You needn't be afraid. I'm very solid flesh and blood; worse luck for you, perhaps, old man. Gad, but it's good, though, to see you once again.'

He threw down his hat among the papers on the table, tossed his gloves into it, and drew me on to the window-seat beside him.

Already the spell began to work, the spell of his extraordinary personal charm. Already he captivated me, firing my somewhat sluggish imagination. Already I asked nothing better than to devote myself to him, spend myself for him, stamp out the evil

and nourish the good in him, at whatever loss or disadvantage to myself.

I inquired what had brought him to Cambridge.

'I am in trouble, Brownlow,' he answered simply, while his face hardened. 'It's an ugly sort of trouble, which I have not the pluck to meet single-handed. I cannot see my way through or out of it. I tell you, it was beginning to make me feel rather desperate. And I remembered your wisdom of old'—

He smiled at me, patting my knee.

'So, as I do not want to take to drink—which last night seemed the only alternative—I took the road this morning instead, and came to look for you. Perhaps it is a rather presumptuous proceeding on my part. I have no claim on you, for I have been neglectful and selfish. I know that well enough—not by any means a model pupil, dear old man, not any great credit to you. But you cared for me once.'

Cared for him? God was my witness that I did!

'And, as I tell you, I have not courage to meet this trouble alone. It raises a devil suspicion and anger in me. I am afraid of being unjust, of losing my head and doing some wild thing I shall regret for the rest of my life. But we need not go into all this just yet, and spoil our first half-hour together. It will keep.'

And he looked away, avoiding my eyes with a certain shyness, as I fancied; glanced round the room, at its sober colouring, solid furniture, ranges of bookshelves and many books; glanced through the window at the fine trees, the bright garden, and quiet river glistening in the still June sunlight.

'Gad! but what a delightful place!' he said. 'I am glad to know where you live, Brownlow, and I could find it in my heart to envy you, I think. The wheels must run very smooth.'

I thought of Nellie, of my home-coming from Westrea. Verily, less smooth than he imagined—sometimes.

'Why, why did not they let me come here,' he broke out—'as I implored them to, after the row about—about—at Hover, I mean, when you left me? I would have given anything to come up to the university then, and work, and have you with me still. Ah! how different everything would be now! But my father refused to listen. The plan did not suit some people's book, I suppose; and they worked upon him, making him hopelessly obstinate. Nothing would do, but into the Guards I must go. I begged for if only a year with you here, at Cambridge, first. But

not a bit of it. Out they pitched me, neck and crop, into the London whirlpool, to sink or swim as I could—sink for choice, I fancy, as far as they were concerned.'

He shrugged his shoulders.

'It is to be hoped they are better satisfied at the result than I am,' he added, with an oath. 'But what is done is done—and, curse it, there is no going back. As you make your bed—or as others make it for you—so must you lie on it.'

Sad words from a boy of barely one-and-twenty, as I thought. Surely punishment awaited those, somewhere and somewhen, who had taught him so harsh a lesson, and taught it him so young.

Meanwhile, my first surprise and excitement over, I watched Hartover carefully, fearing to see in him signs of past dissipation and excess. But his beauty was as great as ever. His flesh firm, moreover, his eyes and skin clear. He had matured rather than altered, grown considerably taller and filled-out, though his figure remained gracefully alert and slight. Two points only did I observe which I did not quite like—namely an aspect of anxiety and care upon the brow, and little bitter lines at the corners of the handsome mouth, giving a singular arrogance to his expression when the face was in repose.

We talked for a while of indifferent matters, and he asked me to walk with him to the Bull Hotel, where he had left the post-chaise in which he drove down from town, and where he invited me to dine with him and stay the night as his guest.

'Give me what time you can, Brownlow,' he said. 'Leave all the good boys, the white sheep of your numerous flock, to take care of themselves for once; and look after the bad boy, the black sheep—the scapegoat, rather. For, upon my soul, it amounts to that. The sins of others are loaded on to my unhappy head, I promise you, with a vengeance.'

I could not but be aware of curious and admiring glances, as I walked up King's Parade in his company. Reflected glory covered me, while he, royally careless of the observation he excited, was quick to note the grace of the different college buildings, the effects of light and colour, to ask a hundred pertinent questions, make a hundred pertinent remarks on all which caught his eye. What a delightful mind he had, open both to poetic and humorous impressions; instinctively using the right word, moreover, and striking out the happy phrase when it suited him to lay aside his slang.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WE dined in a private room on the first floor, which overlooked the street. Hartover proved a brilliant host. Once or twice, after anecdotes a trifle too highly salted for my white tie and clerical coat, he checked himself with a pretty air of penitence, expressing a mischievous hope I 'wasn't shocked.' Shocked I was not, being no puritan; but somewhat grieved, I must admit, his wit should take so gross a turn. Yet what wonder? The guard-room is hardly mealy-mouthed, I supposed; neither, I could imagine, was French Mademoiselle—in intimacy. To her, by the way, I observed, Hartover made so far no smallest allusion.

But he spoke of Braithwaite, asking, with an indifference too studied to carry conviction, if my friendship still continued with the father and daughter, and—'were they well?' I answered both questions briefly in the affirmative; and there, to my relief, the subject dropped.

Towards the end of dinner his high spirits, which, entertaining though he had been, struck me all along as slightly forced, deserted him, and he became silent and preoccupied. Were we approaching disclosure of the trouble which, as he asserted, brought him here hot-foot, to Cambridge and to me? How gladly would I have made the way of confession easy for him! But I had sense to know I must be passive in the matter. Whatever confidence he gave must be given spontaneously. To question him, however circumspectly, would be to put him off by arousing his sensitive pride.

As the waiter brought in coffee and lights, Hartover rose, swung out onto the balcony, and, leaning his elbows on the high iron rail of it, stood gazing down into the street. The June twilight lingered, disputing the feeble glimmer of the street lamps. Roofs, gables, pinnacles and towers showed velvet black against the sweet translucence of an almost colourless sky. Footsteps, voices, a grind of wheels and cloppet, cloppet, of horse-hoofs over the stones; the scream of swifts in the buoyant rush of their evening flight, and the tang of a chapel bell, a single reiterated note. Some five minutes must have elapsed while these varied sounds reached me from without. Then Hartover raised his head, calling imperatively over his shoulder—

'Brownlow, Brownlow, where are you? I want you. Come here.'

Evidently he had reached some crisis of purpose or of feeling. I went out into the warm evening air and stood beside him. His head was lowered, and again he gazed down into the street.

'I am sorry, I am ashamed, Brownlow,' he said, an odd thick-ness in his speech, 'but I am afraid I have come here to-day and disturbed you on false pretences. I am afraid I cannot bring myself to talk to you about this matter after all.'

He paused as asking an answer.

'Very well,' I replied. 'I, at all events, have gained by your coming, in that I have had the joy of seeing you again. Leave the rest if you think fit. You alone can know what you wish—know what appears to you right under the circumstances. You must use your own judgment.'

'Ah! there you have me,' he returned sharply. 'I don't know what I wish. I am uncertain what is right. I distrust my own judgment. In short I'm cornered, Brownlow, miserably, detestably cornered. To speak looks to me, at this moment, like an act of unpardonable treachery. Yet, if I don't speak, I may be rushed before many days are out, by my own mad anger, into something even worse than treachery. Do you understand?'

In a sense I did understand, by intuition born of affection and sympathy. But, unless I was greatly mistaken in my reading of him, all this was merely preliminary. If I waited, I should understand, or at least hear, the whole. And that it would be well for him I should hear the whole I had—God helping me—no shadow of doubt.

Slowly the twilight expired, while the blue of the night sky, opaque, profound, travelled stealthily, almost imperceptibly, downward from the zenith. The joyous scream of the swifts ceased, and the bell tanged irregularly, nearing its finish. As it did so, a little group of gownsmen, gathered upon the pavement immediately below, seized by an irresponsible spirit of frolic—as most young animals are prone to be at dusk—started laughing and skylarking, their black raiment fluttering, batlike, as they skirmished across the greyneess of the street.

Whether the sudden outcry jarred his already strained nerves, or whether the careless whole-hearted fun and laughter of these men, so little younger than himself, offered too mordant a contrast to his own troubled state, Hartover flung in from the balcony with an oath, hesitated for an instant, then blew out the lights and threw himself into an armchair.

'No, I'm not strong enough to hold my tongue. Wretched weakling that I am,' he groaned, 'I must blab. And concerning a woman too.'

He extended his hand, through the semi-darkness, motioning me to a chair.

'Sit there, please,' he said. 'My God, when it comes to the point how I despise myself, Brownlow! It's—it's about her, about *Fédore*.'

'Yes,' I replied, as calmly as I could, for his tone moved me deeply. And the subject, too! I trembled, penetrated alike by fear and hope of what I should hear next.

'For the last month or six weeks something's been wrong—some mystery on hand I cannot fathom. Somebody who has, or imagines they have, a hold over her is pressing her for money, as far as I can make out. I believe—oh! it is an abominable suspicion, but I cannot rid my mind of it—this person visits the house when she is sure I shall be away. I have no idea who, Brownlow; but someone belonging to her old life, before I married her. Each time lately that I have been with her she has insisted upon my telling her exactly when I intend to come again. Nothing will pacify her but that I must fix a date and hour. Her persistence has vexed me once or twice. We nearly quarrelled over it. She says '—he choked a little—' it is only that she may be able to put on a pretty gown, prepare a nice little dinner, and have everything smart and charming for me. But I don't believe that is her sole reason—perhaps I am just a jealous brute—but I can't. I wish to heaven I could!'

He waited, fighting down his emotion.

'Yesterday matters came to a head. I went with '—he mentioned the names of several young men, well known, not to say notorious, in fashionable and sporting circles—' to a race meeting at ——. I meant to stop the week. But racing bores me after a little while, and the play was too high at night. Positively I couldn't afford it. So I cut my stay short, went back to town, and to Chelsea. I can't deny I had been living rather hard, and I was cross with myself—I really have kept awfully straight for the last six months, Brownlow—and a bit seedy and out of sorts.'

Again he waited.

'I let myself in at the garden door, and then at the house-door—as a matter of course. I had no intention of jumping any surprise on her. I was not thinking about my suspicions or any

little tiff we had had. I only wanted to get to her, Brownlow, because I knew she'd put me into good conceit with myself—tease and pet and amuse me, you know—she can be devilish amusing when she likes'—

His voice broke.

'Yes,' I said quietly, 'yes'—

My heart bled for him; but I must be cautious and husband my resources. The time to speak would surely come, but it was not yet.

'I found the house empty,' he went on presently, recovering himself, 'windows bolted and doors locked. I called her, and looked for her upstairs and down; but neither she nor the maid was at home. I was disappointed, of course; but I would not let myself be angry. I had told her I should be away till the end of the week, so she had a perfect right to go out if she wanted to. Finally I went into the drawing-room, meaning to wait there till she came in. But, somehow, I received a new impression of the house. It struck me as grubby, fusty, low-class. I wondered why I had never observed this before, or whether it was merely the effect of my disappointment at her absence. There were scraps of a torn-up letter on the carpet, for one thing, which I greatly disliked. I began to pick them up, and casually—I did not attempt to read it of course—I remarked the writing was in French. Then I thought I would smoke, to pass the time until she came back. I wanted something with which to cut off the end of my cigar, but found I had brought no penknife, so I rummaged in her little work-table for a pair of scissors. I could not find any in the top work-box part, and tried to pull out the square silk-covered drawer arrangement underneath, as I remembered often seeing her put her scissors away in it with her work. But the beastly thing was locked or jammed. Like a fool, I lost my temper over it, and dragged and poked till the catch gave and the drawer flew open. And—and, Brownlow, inside I saw a couple of white leather jewel-cases—oh! the whole thing was so incredible, such a profanation—it made me sick—stamped with a monogram and coronet. I recognised them at once. They belonged to my mother—own mother I mean'—

His tone grew fierce.

'Not her Magnificence. Her hands have never touched, and touching defiled them, I am thankful to think.—These jewels would come to me, in the ordinary course of events, with certain

other possessions of my mother's, at my majority. Meanwhile they have always been kept in the strong-room at Hover. And, Brownlow—this is the point of the whole hateful business—they were among the valuables that scoundrel, Marsigli—you remember him, my step-mother's beloved Italian butler?—made off with last year, and which by some to my mind incomprehensible stupidity on the part of the police—I have often talked it over with Fedore—have never yet been traced.'

'Were the contents of the cases intact?' I asked.

He hesitated.

'No—' he said at last, unwillingly, almost I thought despairingly—and that makes it all the more intolerable. The cases were empty; and from the position in which I found them it seemed to me they had been thrown into the drawer just anyhow, by a person in a frantic hurry—too great a hurry to make sure the drawer was actually locked. For, if it had been properly locked, it would not have given way so easily when I tried to force it. These signs of haste increased my fears, Brownlow. For think,' he cried with sudden passion, 'only think what it all points to, what it may all mean! How could these precious things of my mother's have found their way into the drawer of Fedore's work-table—unless? The conjunction of ideas would be positively grotesque if—if it were not so damnable.—Does not it occur to you what horrible possibilities are opened out?'

It did. I gauged those possibilities far more clearly than he, indeed, remembering my conversation with Warcop in the stables at Hover but a few weeks back. For was not Warcop's theory in process of being proven up to the hilt? But how could I speak of either theory or proof to Hartover, distracted and tortured as he was? To do so would be incomparably cruel. No, I must play a waiting game still. The truth—or, to be exact, that which I firmly and increasingly believed to be the truth—must reach him by degrees, lest he should be driven into recklessness or violence. I would temporise, try to find excuses even, so as to retard rather than hasten the shock of that most ugly disclosure.

'All which you tell me is very strange and perplexing,' I said. 'But do not let us be hurried into rash and possibly unjust conclusions. There may be some explanation which will put a very different complexion upon affairs. Have you asked for any?'

'No,' he said. 'It was too soon to think of that. I could not meet her, could not trust myself to see or speak to her then. My one impulse was to get away, to get out of the house in which, as

it seemed to me, I had been so shamelessly betrayed and tricked. I was half mad with rage and grief. For—ah! don't you understand, Brownlow?—I do love her. Not as I loved Nellie Braithwaite. That was unique—a love more of the soul than the senses. Pure and clean as a wind of morning, blowing straight out of paradise. The love of my youth, of—in a way—my virginity; such as can never come twice in my or any man's life.'

He stopped, a sob in his throat. But not for long. The flood-gates were open—all the proud, wayward, undisciplined, sensitive nature in revolt.

'My love for Fédore is different—no morning wind from Eden about that. How should there be? In the interval I had very effectually parted company with all claims to the angelic state. But think—she nursed me, dragged me back from the very mouth of hell; protected me from those who sought to ruin me; gave herself to me; made a home for me, too, of a sort—oh! that poor, poor, hateful little Chelsea house!—coaxed me, flirted with me, kept me from gambling and from drink. How could I do otherwise than marry her, and love her, out of the merest decency of ordinary gratitude? I owe her so much—— And now'——

Here Hartover gave way completely. I felt rather than saw him—there was no light in the room save that thrown upward from the lamps in the street—fling himself sideways in the chair, crushing his face down upon the arm of it in a paroxysm of weeping.

Only a woman should look on a man's tears, since the motherhood resident in every woman—whether potential or as an accomplished act—has power to staunch those tears without humiliation and offence. To his fellow-man the sight is disabling; painful or unseemly according to individual quality, but, in either case, excluding all possibility of approach.

I rose, went over to the window, and waited there. The boy should have his cry out, unhindered by my neighbourhood, since I knew he was beyond my clumsy male capacity of consolation. Later, when he came to himself, he would understand I had withdrawn not through callousness, but through reverence. Meanwhile, what a position and what a prospect! My heart sank. How, in heaven's name, could he be drawn up out of this pit he had dugged for himself? And he loved Nellie still. And, whatever his faults, whatever his weaknesses—vices even—his beauty and charm remained, beguiling, compelling, as ever. What woman could resist him? The thought gave me a pang. I put it from me sternly. Self, and again self—would self never die? Even in this hour

of my dear boy's agony, as he lay sobbing his hot young heart out within half a dozen paces of me, must I think of myself and of my private sorrow ?

I looked up into the vast serenity of the star-gemmed sky above the black irregular outline of the buildings opposite, and renewed my vow to Nellie—remembering no greater love hath any man than this, that he lay down his life—life of the body, or far dearer life of emotions, the affections—for his friend.

And presently, as I still mused, I became aware of a movement in the room and of Hartover close beside me, his right arm cast about my neck.

'Dear old man, dear old man,' he said hoarsely, yet very gently, 'forgive me. I have felt for these past twenty-four hours as though the last foothold had gone, the last foothold between me and perdition. But it isn't so—you are left. Stay by me, Brownlow. See me through. Before God, I want to do right. Your worthless pupil wants for once to be a credit to you. But I cannot stand alone. I am afraid of myself. I distrust my own nature. If I go to her—to Fédore—with those empty jewel boxes of my mother's in my hand and she lies to me, I shall want to kill her. And if she tells me what I can't but believe is the truth, I shall want to blow my own brains out. For she has been very much to me. She is my wife—and what can the future hold for either of us but estrangement, misery and disgrace ?'

He waited, steadied his voice, and then—

'I know it is no small thing I ask of you ; but will you come back to town with me to-morrow ? And will you see her first, and so give me time to get myself in hand and decide what is to be done, before she and I meet ? Will you stand between me and the devils of revenge and despair who tempt me ? Will you do this because—barring you, Brownlow—I have nothing, no one, left ?'

Needless to set down here what I answered. He should have his way. How, in God's name, could I refuse him ?

Then, as on that first night of my arrival at Hover long ago, I got him away to bed. Sat by him till he slept—at first restlessly, feverishly, murmuring to himself ; and once—it cut me to the quick—calling Fédore by name, as one who calls for help in limitless distress.

The brief summer night was over and the dawn breaking before I felt free to leave him, seek my room, and take some much-needed rest.

(To be continued.)

LEST WE FORGET.

A WORD ON WAR MEMORIALS.

AN old friend of mine, who was a boy at Rugby under the kindly, orthodox and dignified Dr. Goulburn, told me that on his first evening at that great school, a bewildered and timid little creature, after he had been much catechised and derided by a lot of cheerful youngsters, and with a terrible perspective before him of endless interviews with countless strange and not necessarily amiable mortals, a loud bell rang, and all trooped down to prayers. He sat on a bench in a big bare hall with a timbered roof, a door opened and a grave butler appeared, carrying two wax candles in silver candlesticks, followed by the Headmaster in silk gown and bands, in unimaginable state. The candles were set down on a table. The Headmaster opened a great Bible, and in a sonorous voice read the twelfth chapter of the Book of Joshua, a gloomy enough record, which begins, 'Now these are the kings of the land, which the Children of Israel smote,' and ends up with a sinister catalogue, 'The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, one'—and so on for many verses, finishing up with 'The king of the nations of Gilgal, one; the king of Tirzah, one; all the kings, thirty and one.' After which pious and edifying exercise, the book was closed, and prayer offered.

My old friend was an impressionable boy, and it seemed to him, he said, that there was a fearful and ominous significance in this list of slaughtered monarchs, depicting and emphasizing the darker side of life. But I have often thought that a few words from the Headmaster, on the vanity of human greatness and the triumph of the divine purpose, might have turned these lean and bitter memorials of the dead into an unforgettable parable. What, for instance, could be more profoundly moving in the scene of the 'Passing of Arthur,' where the knight steps slowly in the moonlight from the ruined shrine and the place of tombs:

'Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights—and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam'?

That seems to lend the last touch of mystery and greatness to a scene of human endeavour, that the earth beneath the living feet should cover the bones, the hardy and heroic limbs of those who had lived and fought worthily. As the dying king, with the poignant accent of passion cries aloud :

“ Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved ! ”

For nothing surely in the world can be so utterly and simply moving as the record of dead greatness—unless perhaps it be the oblivion which is the end of all greatness at the last. There is a place on the bleak top of the South Downs, a great tumulus, with an earth-work round it, all grassy now and tufted with gorse, the sheep grazing over it, which looks for miles north and east and west over the fertile weald, with shadowy hills on the horizon ; and to the south, where the great ridges fold together, you can catch through the haze a golden glint of the sea. I never pass the place without a deep and strange thrill. It is called the Mound of the Seven Kings ; it looks over a grassy space which is known as ‘ Terrible Down,’ and of what day and what doom it is the record, who shall say ?

It seems impossible to us now, just as it seemed to the old hill-men who raised that tumulus, that as the world welters and widens onward, the great tragedies and losses and sacrifices which we have seen with our eyes, and the thought of which has so possessed our souls with a sense of grief and glory combined, should become but a tale that is told. But it is one of the thoughts which lie deepest and noblest in the mind and soul of man, the thought of old and infinite strife and endeavour, pain and death, courage and hope so richly blended, till it seems too great for the heart to hold. The mystery of it is that, as the Psalmist says : ‘ I see that all things come to an end ; but Thy commandment is exceeding broad.’ The thought, if I can define it, leaps like fire from crumbling ashes—all this great pageant of energy and heroism and fame fading farther and farther into the past—and yet, in spite of the hush of the tolling bell and the solemn music, the certainty that it is all worth doing and enduring, that we must wrest the great values out of life and make of it a noble thing ; and that while memory fades and honour seems to perish, yet the seed once sown, it springs up again and again in life and beyond death, beyond all possibility of extinction.

One of the things for which, in a great time like the present—great for all its sadness, and perhaps because of its sadness—one of the things for which I thank God is that this war has revealed as nothing else could have done the latent heroism of our nation. If only it could make us poets and cure us of being prophets! I have often been ashamed to the bottom of my heart of the cries of panic-mongers and crabbed pessimists shrieking in our ears that we were a nation sunk in sloth and luxury and indifference. I have lived all my life among the young, and if ever there was a thing of which I was certain, it was that our youth was brave and modest and manly—as this long and bitter fight has daily and hourly proved.

And we have a task before us—to see that the memory of those who have fought for us and died for us should be as stably and as durably commemorated as possible. It is not that I think of a memorial as being in any sense a reward for the honoured dead. If there is one thing which our heart tells us, it is that they have a nobler reward than that. A new life, doubtless, a passing from strength to strength. But as Shelley so immortally said, 'Fame is love disguised,' and we owe it to our love and gratitude not only to remember, but to commemorate. I defy anyone, however simple and stolid, to set foot in our great Abbey, and not be thrilled with the thought, 'After all, humanity is a splendid thing, so full of devotion and greatness as it is!' Statesmen, monarchs, writers, artists, men of science, men of learning, there they sleep; there is a generous glow in many young hearts, which may thus be kindled. The poet of boyhood makes the boy, just disengaging himself from the beloved school and stepping into the world, say to himself:

'Much lost I: something stayed behind,
A snatch maybe of ancient song,
Some breathings of a deathless mind;
Some love of truth; some hate of wrong.

And to myself in games I said,
"What mean the books? Can I win fame?
I would be like the faithful dead,
A fearless man and pure of blame."

This, then, is our present task—to see that our dead are worthily commemorated for our own sakes and for the sake of those who come after. How shall we do it?

In the first place, we must not do it idly and carelessly—we must take thought, have a plan and a purpose, not be in too great a hurry. Hurry is the worst foe of memorials. We have a national habit—I think it is rather a sign of greatness—not to do anything until we are obliged; but the result of that often is a loss of grace and fineness; because people who must act, and are a little ashamed of not having acted, accept any solution.

What I hope we shall do is to take careful thought where our memorials shall be set, so that they may be most constantly and plainly seen; and then how they may best fulfil their purpose, which is to remind us first, and next to kindle emotion and imagination. We have an ugly habit of combining, if we can, local utility with a memorial, as in the well-known story of the benevolent clergyman who read out the announcement of the death of a great statesman and added, 'That is just what we wanted! We have long needed a new water supply!' That is like using a grandfather's sword to trim a privet-hedge with! I do not believe in fitting things in. If we commemorate, let us commemorate by a memorial which arrests and attracts the eye, is long and gratefully remembered, and by an inscription which touches the heart, and does not merely merge a man among the possessors of all human gifts and virtues. I remember a Georgian monument in a cathedral, where a lean man in a toga peeped anxiously out of an arbour of fluted columns, and of whom it was announced that in him 'every talent which adorns the human spirit was united with every virtue which sustains it.' How different is the little tablet in a church I know on which a former choir-boy is commemorated! He had joined the army, and had won a Victoria Cross in the Boer War which he did not live to receive. The facts were most briefly told; and below were the words, which I can hardly read without tears:

'Thou hast put a new song in my mouth.'

What we want, then, are beauty, dignity, simplicity, and force. We want what appeals directly to the eye, and then darts a strong emotion into the heart, an emotion in which gratitude and hope are blended.

I must not here attempt to unfold a wide technical scheme; indeed I could not if I would; but I may perhaps outline a few principles.

First comes the difficulty that places like to manage their own

affairs; and that the men who administer local interests, however devotedly and industriously, do not acquire their influence by artistic tastes. The next difficulty is that our artistic instinct in England is not widely diffused. When Walter Pater's attention was called to some expensive tribute, and he became aware that an expression of admiration was required, he used to say in his soft voice, 'Very costly, no doubt,' and this was always accepted as an appropriate compliment, he said. A third difficulty is the deep-seated mistrust in England of the expert—it is all part of our independence—but the expert is often regarded simply as a man who lets you in for heavier expense than you had intended.

It would be well if some central advisory board could be established—a central authority can hardly be expected, and indeed would not even be desirable. The nature of memorials should be carefully scrutinised. We are always weak in allegorical representation, and perhaps for that very reason have a great fondness for it. Our civic heraldry, for instance, is woefully weak, not by excess of symbolism, so much as by a desperate inclusiveness of all local tradition, till the shield becomes a landscape in which a company of travellers have hung their private property on every bush.

Thus with our taste for representing and explaining and accounting and cataloguing, our memorials become architectural first, with every cornice loaded with precarious figures, like the painting described by Dickens of six angels carrying a stout gentleman to heaven in festoons with some difficulty. Our inscriptions become biographies. Again, the surrounding scene is little regarded. A statesman in a bronze frock-coat and trousers reading aloud a bronze manuscript behind the railings of a city square, embowered in acacias, has no power over the mind except the power of a ludicrous sense of embarrassment. A statue, majestic enough in a pillared alcove, is only uncomfortable in a storm of wind and rain.

We ought, I believe, to fight shy of elaborate *designs*, because the pantomime of allegory at once begins. What we rather need is simplicity of statement, with perhaps a touch of emblem, no more, of characteristic material, of perfect gravity, so that the gazer can see at once that the matter recorded is great and significant, and desires to know more. It is said that an inscription was once to be seen in India, marking one of the farthest points

of the advance of Alexander the Great. It was a slab with the words :

ENTATΘA · ECTHN

‘ Here I stood ’—upon it. What could be more impressive, what more calculated to sow a seed of wonder in an imaginative mind ?

These memorials should, I believe, evoke the spirit of the artist, as a craftsman, rather than as a designer. Alike in inscriptions and in representations, the wholesome and humble appeal must be direct and personal, avoiding rhetoric and over-emphasis, as well as elaborate conventions which other hands will dully and mechanically reproduce. If, as in cast metal-work, reproduction is natural and inevitable, let the designs be perfectly simple and sincere ; if again it be painter, sculptor, carver, or builder that is called upon to create a memorial, let the responsibility and originality of the craft be his, and not be superseded or overruled by the authority of the design—for this indeed is, as Professor Prior said wittily to me the other day, as though a surgeon should provide a specification and an estimate for an operation, and leave the execution of it to other hands.

But we must not suppose that we can insist upon any particular form of memorial in any particular place. What we may desire is that the memorial, whatever it is, of this great and heroic trial through which we are passing, should grow up out of the minds of the inhabitants of a city or a town, and should be made by the hands of inhabitants as well. I do not desire that they should be too costly. Indeed it may well be that we shall have given so much of our resources to the prosecution of the war that we shall have but little left for adorning our trophies. I do not desire that they should be constructed to serve other uses, at least not primarily. They are to tell their own story, a story of noble deeds, and provide alike a dedication of our dead to honour, and a dedication of ourselves to gratitude and future effort.

I hope too most earnestly that we shall not accumulate resources on one national monument, to astonish tourists and to feed our vanity ; but that as many places as possible should have a record of a great fact which has penetrated our national life more deeply than any historical event in the whole of our annals.

Forethought, then, simplicity, naturalness, eloquence of emotion rather than of word, native feeling, these will, I hope, be the notes of our memorials. Let us try for once to express ourselves, not

to cover up truth with turgid verdicts, but to say what we mean and what we feel as simply and emphatically as we can.

We are not likely to forget the war ; but what we may forget is that the result of it is the outcome of modest, faithful, loyal services done with no flourish or vanity, by thousands of very simple, straightforward people, who did not argue themselves into indignation, or reflect much about what they were doing, but came forward, leaving comfort and home and work and love, without any balancing of motives, but just because they felt that they must take their place in the battle of liberty and right with intolerable pride and aggression. That is the plain truth ; and that is the best and only proof of the greatness of a nation that it should prefer death, if need be, to all the pleasant business of life. If this or any of this can be recorded, if this national impulse can be kept alive in our children, we need not fear either life with all its complications, or death with all its mysteries. The nation will live ; and the memorials of these dark and great days will stand to witness to our far-off sons and daughters that their old forefathers did not live to no purpose and did not die in vain.

A GERMAN BUSINESS MIND.

BY SIR JOHN WOLFE BARRY, K.C.B.

Now that we are entering on the third year of the war so shamelessly brought about by Germany, the accompanying correspondence, commencing in August 1914, may interest your readers. It indicates the extreme rancour against our country of a leading and capable German manufacturer, not merely evoked by our declaration of war, but pre-existing for a long time and very carefully concealed from his English friends. It was to me in 1914 a curious lifting of the curtain, and indicates for our present guidance what will remain to be encountered by us in the economic struggle against the mercantile interests of Germany when the war ends.

The manufacturer's letter is also interesting as showing clearly the anticipations held in Germany, when she declared war, of a speedy and highly successful result of the wicked and stealthy attack on her neighbours for which she had been so long preparing. It is astonishing moreover in the extraordinary ignorance displayed, on the part of a clever leader of German enterprise, as to the Constitution, resources, and temper of the British Empire, and it gives full vent to his hatred and contempt of France, Russia, and Japan.

This letter, printed second in the series, was addressed to an intimate friend of mine who was closely connected with engineering interests in Germany, and who had known the writer well for some years, having had important interests with him in business. My friend sent me the letter for my perusal, but did not disclose the name of the writer.

The third letter is an attempted reply on my part to the statements and misstatements of the German manufacturer, and requires no comment from me. My friend sent a copy of my letter to his German correspondent, but it evoked no reply.

Copies of both these letters were forwarded, anonymously, by my friend to a well-known English engineer long resident in Germany, who occupied a leading and acknowledged position in that country. He had been for many years closely in touch with very many members of his profession there, and was connected with numerous commercial interests.

As will be seen, he promptly identified the German manufacturer,

and his note on the correspondence is placed first in the series in order to make clear the character and position of the writer of the amazing letter No. 2. He expresses the astonishment which he felt at its contents, remarking that the sentiments expressed in it had been carefully concealed in his interviews with him both before and after the outbreak of the war. The correspondence appears to me to give much food for thought in many various ways, and I may, with these few explanatory comments, let the letters speak for themselves.

Letter No. 1.

Extract from a letter received by Mr. A. B. of London from Mr. C. D., a gentleman long resident in Germany and unusually well acquainted with German commercial life :

Received February 1915.

' I now see from whom the letter came. He is a friend of mine. I have had a good deal to do with him lately, also after the outbreak of war. Curiously, although knowing me to be an Englishman, he has never in the slightest manner expressed himself in a like sense to me. He has evidently written to you in a great state of excitement. Nevertheless I cannot understand his doing so nor his harbouring the thoughts expressed in his letter. He is a clever and clear-headed man and much respected. His conduct in the labour question is looked upon as exemplary. He has proceeded by quiet well-considered but energetic measures to get his working staff entirely free from labour and social-democratic influences. His workmen are all content with their conditions, and his works therefore free from labour troubles when these break out in other works. I am told that all works at — have profited by his wise measures. I therefore can all the less understand his writing you such an incredible letter. How can men of his position be so blinded to the true facts ?

' The reply you sent* me sets this forth very clearly. I entirely concur in the contents and the opinions expressed in the same.'

Letter No. 2.

A letter written on August 29, 1914, to Mr. A. B. of London by a German business friend, and sent by Mr. A. B., in September 1914, to Sir John Wolfe Barry for his perusal :

' The poisonous seed sown by your good King Edward VII. has sprung up. It is a well-known fact that the great aim of his life,

* Viz. that of Sir John Wolfe Barry printed below as letter No. 3.

to which he devoted all his energy, was to unite the whole world in one bond against Germany, to annihilate that hated nation.

'His disciple Minister Grey has seized the opportunity of tightening the noose with which Germany is to be strangled. For ten years English diplomacy has worked for that end, to close up the ring round us. Now the die is irrevocably cast and Destiny goes its way. No one can say positively what the outcome will be, but one thing I do believe, and sixty-seven million Germans believe it with me, and that is that we shall be victorious.

'We shall win because we are fighting for the right, for our national existence, for civilization. Without England's intervention this war would have been inconceivable. In France, whom we sincerely pity, and whom this war will crush, one hears a united cry that she is ready for peace. In Russia it was only the aristocratic party that has forced on the war, and they will seize this opportunity to steal. That party of course owns the anti-German press, such as the *Nowoje Wremja* and other papers, which are financed by England. England alone was thirsting for war, and has pressed the other nations into war against us. For years she has seen how we have excelled her more and more in the industrial world. If people were but honest, they would know that the reason for our success lies in the fact that we are an industrious and hardworking folk. In England, on the other hand, there exists a widespread tendency to avoid work. We have no public holidays. Our working week averages fifty-eight hours. We Directors have no "week-ends," we work in the factory on an average from fifty to sixty hours a week, and as a rule spend one or two nights and sometimes even all Sunday in the train in order to get work for our business. Moreover we understand how to adapt ourselves to all possible circumstances, while your people in their well-known arrogance, do not concern themselves with the requirements of other countries.

'Because we have attained great prosperity by ability and hard work, the hatred and jealousy you bear us Germans has grown beyond all bounds. This embarrassing competition must be crushed so that you can go on in your comfortable decadent existence.

'In order that a people, who appear particularly Christian, may attain this worthy goal, the barbarian hordes of the Slavs are mobilised against the champions of civilization, to whom the world owes so much. The natives in Africa are incited against us, and we are even betrayed in Japan. This last act has raised a storm of indignation in our country which would alarm you, had you any idea of it. England will certainly make terrible amends for this underhand deed. The hatred which is raging among Germany's

sixty-seven millions will avenge itself on England in a most fearful way. For a hundred years the fist of every German will be clenched whenever the word "England" is spoken.

'I have had many experiences in my time, but never have I known anything like the satisfaction which prevailed throughout our country yesterday, when it first became known that your army of mercenaries had been under the fire of our noble reserves, and that we were in a position to shoot down the people who draw the sword for money. Your soldiers who oppose us in the field will yet learn something of the loathing which our army has for anything that is English. Our sailors look forward eagerly to the time when your fleet, of which you talk so much, appears in German waters. You may be quite sure that a large part of it will never again see the shores of England, even if we lose the whole of our navy. It is to be hoped that your fleet will at last summon up courage to attack us. If they come under the guns of Heligoland and Kuxhaven, your battleships will share the same fate as befell the forts at Liège and Namur.

'In this war, which is the most shameful crime that has ever been committed against humanity, and which lies entirely at the door of English statesmen, we shall be triumphant. England will be shaken to her foundations. Mankind could not but lose its belief in right and justice, and more particularly in the Divine guidance of the universe, if a country, who in the most shameless way professes Christianity and yet allies herself with Asiatics and barbarians, were to be victorious.

'Your newspapers, of which we still regularly receive copies, may overwhelm English readers with falsehoods about our army and its successes. Truth is going forward, and before fourteen days have passed our forces will be investing Paris. Belgium, whom you incited to oppose us, is cursing you. France, whom you likewise forced into war against us, will in future show perfidious Albion the door.

'It is very sad that a country like England which has won for herself so much merit in the progress of mankind, and has produced so many able men, should abandon moral principles proved through the centuries and hand herself over to a band of unscrupulous men like Minister Grey. When one considers all the misery which this war, which is the most terrible the world has yet seen, has caused, it makes one shudder to imagine what sort of conscience the Councillors of the Czar, your Minister Grey and Minister Churchill must have.

'Your great philosopher Carlyle has foreseen and indeed prophesied the moral decadence which always precedes political downfall. England has become the champion of a band of murderers who eleven years ago assassinated their King and his consort and

have now killed a foreign prince. This nation who wishes to be so great conspires with the most barbaric race which the world has ever seen, the Russians, and is the brother-in-arms of the most treacherous, most contemptible, most ungrateful people that the earth holds, the Japanese.

'I am sure America will endorse the general scorn and wrath towards your country. Australia will not be very grateful to England who wishes to make the position of the Japanese more assured. I will go so far as to maintain that the British world-empire will split off in all directions. The world's history must be judged by subsequent generations, and the judgment of the world now passes sentence on your country's action.

'If I have offended you by what I have written, just consider I cannot do otherwise than say what is my opinion. My personal esteem for you is not altered by what is taking place.'

Letter No. 3.

From Sir John Wolfe Barry to Mr. A. B.:

October 4th, 1914.

'I have read with profound interest and grief the copy of the letter of August 29th from your German friend. The rancour which it displays is beyond words. It is apparently useless to criticise its contents looking to the frame of mind of the writer, who, I think and fear, expresses the present general feeling in Germany of hatred and anger with our country. Many of his statements and arguments are however absolutely and fundamentally erroneous and are capable of complete refutation.

'The poisoning of German thought in respect of Great Britain does not date from anything done by King Edward and still less from Sir Edward Grey or the present or former Ministry. It began long earlier in the antagonism between the military class and what may be termed the liberal aspirations of many thoughtful Germans when the Crown Prince, afterwards the Emperor Frederick William, married our Princess Royal. Both were in sympathy with liberal ideas and they were violently opposed by Bismarck and the blood-and-iron school, while the youth of Germany were systematically taught by the professors and writers of Germany, under the encouragement of Bismarck and his school of thought, to hate and despise Great Britain. There is not and never has been a corresponding feeling here towards Germany.

'Of course the two countries are rivals in trade and commerce, but that is no reason for rancorous hatred. We are keen rivals in trade with the United States and other countries, but such rivalries

have not engendered any other feelings than that each country should do its best honourably to succeed in competition. It must never be forgotten in this connection that in England and in our colonies Germans, though keeping a strict barrier of tariffs themselves, have had absolute freedom in competition, that they have availed themselves of it and have made huge profits under our Free Trade system. Thus the rancour of Germany against Great Britain must be sought for in other directions, and it cannot be truthfully put down to trade rivalry.

'The cause is in fact to be found in the *Welt Politik*, the jealousy of Germany of British world power and in the aspirations of crushing Great Britain by force of arms. This has been the persistent and avowed policy of the Kaiser and the Junker class.

'The idea was to fight France and Russia to a finish and then concentrate all forces against England (and parenthetically against Belgium) and to destroy the British Empire. The present extreme and violent hatred on the part of Germany is due to the probability of the failure of that deep-laid scheme in consequence of England supporting her Allies, and refusing to break her pledged word to Belgium. It may be also caused by the feeling which must be somewhere embedded in German thought, that Germany has behaved dishonourably and scandalously to Belgium, whose neutrality she most solemnly guaranteed.

'If one looks back on the history of the last twenty-five years, or thereabouts, one sees Bismarck threatening an unprovoked war with France, and only withdrawing under the threat of the opposition of Russia and Great Britain. This proposed attack on France by Bismarck was a most shameful episode, for France's only offence was her existence and recuperative power after her disasters in 1870. Then came the Emperor's policy in our South African War, when, if he could have done so, he would have arrayed Europe against this country, but ended only in having lured Kruger to ruin. Then came the "mailed fist" in China, the seizure of Tsing-tau, and Germany's efforts to crush Japan after the Russo-Japanese war. The demonstrations at Tangiers and Agadir occurred soon afterwards, with more threats of an European war. Afterwards came the annexation of Bosnia by Austria backed by Germany and the insults hurled at Russia by Germany in "shining armour."

'It is these things and others of a similar nature when the German "sabre has been rattled" constantly in the face of Europe, that demonstrated that Germany was the enemy of peace, and which, crowned by the breach of the Treaty of Belgium, showed to the Allies that no treaty would hold Germany, and that her aspirations and lust for world power were Napoleonic. Lastly the Allies

knew that Germany had resolved on war and was making a catspaw of Austria by preventing her from coming to an agreement with Servia and Russia.

'I have said nothing about the systematic building of the German navy. It was within her rights as a Sovereign Power, but none the less the avowed object was to seize the "Trident of the Seas" and to attack Great Britain. It was obviously intended to attack our coasts, so as to enable an invasion of this country to be possible, and to seize the colonies of Great Britain and France.

'Germany was utterly deceived by her diplomatists about England, which was troubled with threats of civil war and by trade disputes, and they never thought that we would stand up for Belgium and fight now rather than later. It is chagrin at the miscalculation, combined with the effects of our maritime power, which has produced the outburst of hatred against us. Commercial rivalry has no real basis for hatred, and as for the question of a "place in the sun," Germany has large and advantageous colonial possessions but can do but little with those which she owns, and has preferred to compete with us in our colonies as she has done so long and so successfully.

'All this history of German jealousy, hatred and designs is very sad, and I do not suppose that your German friend, obsessed as he is, would listen to any facts or arguments. But since I began to write, somewhat hurriedly, to you I have been led on to write more than I intended to try to deal with. I do not imagine that he has seen or would be allowed to see the statement of the British case in the White Paper, which I understand will be further elaborated in a new paper to be published next Tuesday.

'Have you answered your friend's letter, or have you looked upon it as hopeless to do so? In the temper in which he wrote there was nothing visible but fighting to a finish.

'Yours very sincerely,

'(Signed) J. WOLFE BARRY.

'P.S.—I suppose you have not had another letter? It would be interesting to see one of a later date than August 29th.

'J. W. B.'

N.B.—A copy of Sir John Wolfe Barry's letter was sent by Mr. A. B. to his German business friend, but no reply was attempted and the correspondence then ceased.

THE NEW TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY.

BY JOHN W. N. SULLIVAN.

(The time is the present day. St. Anthony is discovered seated on the ground outside his hut. The cross stands in its accustomed place, erect before him; and the great panorama, of which he is now weary, lies below him. He has changed but slightly with the years; something of his old immobility has disappeared. He occasionally shrugs his shoulders when speaking, and he often accompanies his reflections with slight gestures of the hands.)

ANTHONY (*thinking*). I have attained peace. Those troubling visions have disappeared. Never for an instant have I departed from grace since the Saviour's face appeared to me in its shining disc of gold. The burning days and solemn nights pass noiselessly. Rare tempests mutter unnoticed about me. Nothing has power to disturb my beatific monotony; nor hope, nor fear, nor love, nor regrets. I have triumphed over all temptations. The devil has left me. (*He sighs.*) That journey through space, upborne on his wings! (*Stars commence to shine: the daylight lingers.*) I have resisted all the seductions of the flesh. I value not the riches of the mind. (*He starts, and looks fixedly at a vague light which advances across the desert.*) It seems as if——. But that cannot be: I have already sustained all assaults.

(The light approaches rapidly. It is rose-coloured; within it a figure is dimly visible. With a thunderous noise it rolls to within ten paces of the saint. The air shakes and for an instant the stars are obscured. This passes: the light fades, and the form of a woman is perceived, upright, robed in white, her face stern and majestic. The sleeves of her garment are very wide, reaching to the ground.)

THE WOMAN (*slightly raising her right arm*). I have need of you.

ANTHONY (*stammering*). What mean you?

THE WOMAN. I am your creator. Much study and great gifts came together for your making. They also were my children. My best blood flows in your veins. My name must mean everything to you, for you are wholly a product of my essence. I am called La France.

ANTHONY (*pales and gazes fixedly at his visitor*). I belong to God.

THE WOMAN (*sternly*). Do you deny that you are French? (*Anthony blushes and averts his gaze. He becomes sulky.*) What existence have you had apart from France? Would the world still hold you, you and your temptations, apart from——

ANTHONY (*starting up and with outstretched hands*). Say not that name! Say it not! (*He places his fingers in his ears and then, observing that the woman's lips do not move, lowers his hands.*) Speak! but avoid that name. I can endure aught else.

THE WOMAN (*speaks, her arms hanging by her sides. Her head is thrown slightly back. Her words come slowly. Her voice is as the sound of a solemn sea plunging in distant caverns*). The hour of my agony is upon me. I am beset. My strength is great, my courage greater, and my pride reaches to the stars. But I have mighty foes, skilled in all cruel arts. I suffer. I dwell in the shadow of pain. My woes increase and the issue is doubtful. (*She stretches her hands towards Anthony.*) Can you remain aloof?

ANTHONY (*frowning*). This touches me not.

THE WOMAN (*with irony*). Have you, then, purified your heart of all compassion? (*Anthony shrugs his shoulders with a gesture of indifference.*) Are you, indeed, amongst the noblest of my offspring? My sons have sacrificed life for me: they have been content to forgo their ardent curiosities for my sake. What holds you back?

ANTHONY (*with great dignity*). I seek union with God. The Devil himself tempted me for many days. He failed. How, then, can you succeed? (*Softly.*) You cannot, even if you be he.

THE WOMAN (*flinging her arms apart, and letting them drop heavily*). Shame cannot move you. But he who aids me receives great rewards. I will show you visions.

(*She waves her hand. A cloud descends, swaying slowly in the air. It unwinds in sluggish masses till it fills the horizon. It glows with pale fire. Upon it are cities and wide plains. It is a very clean, neat, and precise land. Rivers wind gently between ploughed fields, red and brown. The cloud surges nearer, and presently Anthony discerns an immense temple shining in the sun. It approaches more quickly, its crystalline walls sending innumerable shafts of light before it. Anthony and his companion are enveloped in an insupportable radiance, and the next instant they find they are within the building. Facing them is a great altar, its gold shining dully in the light of a thousand lighted candles. The flags of France droop motionless about the altar; upon it the carved figure of a soldier*

lies prone. *The pavement of the temple is invisible under the feet of the silent crowd. Mighty columns rush upward and are lost in the sweep of the dim roof. The air begins to pulsate with the heavy notes of an organ. Anthony and The Woman are floating above the heads of the multitude. None have observed them.*)

THE WOMAN (*motioning to the crowd*). Here are assembled rich and poor, wise men and fools; judges, statesmen, poets, the criminal and the peasant. All France is here, united in a common gratitude.

ANTHONY. What do they?

THE WOMAN. They honour the dead. (*She points to the prone figure on the altar.*) The soldiers who saved France.

(*A trumpet note is heard and the air rustles with the inclining of a myriad heads. A sweet singing arises behind the altar. A procession slowly passes before it. The first to pass is a man beyond middle age, with a grave, bearded face, a broad white forehead and serene eyes. He kneels for an instant and passes on.*)

THE WOMAN. The Philosophy of France. (*A young man, with a dark, keen face, and a very penetrating look, follows. Each figure, on arriving before the altar, kneels and passes on.*) The Science of France.

(*Then follow the Literature of France, an old man, very harmoniously dressed; the Music and Painting of France, two smaller figures; the Statesmanship and Laws of France, superb men, but badly clothed. There follow priests, merchants, scribes, criminals and courtesans. Anthony and his companion begin to soar higher. The music fades; the bowed heads of the people become indistinct. There is a period of darkness, and Anthony finds himself back on his rock. Before him stands The Woman. The great cloud has utterly vanished.*)

THE WOMAN. You have seen the greatness of France.

ANTHONY (*thoughtfully*). It is a land not without merit.

THE WOMAN. Many have died for it. Many more must die for it, or it will be a stricken land. Is it worth dying for?

ANTHONY (*who has grown more argumentative with the years, hesitates. Then:*) That depends! (*He faces The Woman with a stern and questioning look.*) Much knowledge and beauty lie within the borders of your land, but no man should die for knowledge or beauty. A man's life belongs to God alone. Do your great ones serve God? Do they use their wisdom more fully to

understand His counsels? Do they create beauty to glorify His praise? (*The Woman does not answer.*) I will die for you if my death serves God. I will not die to extend your borders, to add beauty to your palaces, to make you more skilled in wisdom. Will my death bring you nearer to God?

THE WOMAN (*regards Anthony sadly*). You ask me hard questions. Are there not many ways of serving God? I worship God in His creation. I meditate on the laws of His universe. I reveal to the world the beauty of His handiwork. Do I not therefore serve God?

ANTHONY (*drily*). Does that heresy still flourish? God is not His creation.

THE WOMAN. Is knowledge to vanish from the earth? Must none seek after beauty?

ANTHONY (*raising his right hand and speaking with deliberation*). None may seek knowledge for the sake of wisdom. None may seek beauty for the sake of happiness. These things are but the raiment of God. Your great ones count the threads in God's garment, but do they seek God? (*He delicately shrugs his shoulders.*) Does France worship clothes?

THE WOMAN (*sad and bewildered*). I do not understand.

ANTHONY (*regards her long and then speaks gently*). You will never understand, for you are La France. You cannot see without eyes, nor hear without ears. You are the cleverest and most limited of God's children.

THE WOMAN (*stands still, her arms hanging limp, her head bowed. Suddenly she raises her head*). But I suffer!

(*The air grows dim and a cold wind rises. The stars vanish. In the valley, mysteriously visible, Anthony sees a road. It is cumbered with dead and wounded men, lying in all attitudes, some as if asleep, head resting on arm, and some contorted hideously. Anthony notes the curious attitude of one man who seems to have his legs drawn right up under him; until presently he sees that he has no legs. A dead man sits propped against a gun. The whole of his tongue is visible, hanging downwards; the lower jaw is shot away. Presently one of the black shapes starts to flounder clumsily. In the mysterious light comes the glint of steel; the black shape is trying to fix the end of a bayonet in the ground. In one of his clumsy attempts the man reveals the fact that he has but one arm. For some minutes he struggles and finally the bayonet is fixed. The man lies still. Then he raises himself awkwardly on his one arm till the bayonet point touches his*

chest ; he flings his arm straight out and falls with his whole weight on the point. A long red finger points up from his back.)

The Woman waves her arm and the scene vanishes, to be replaced by another. A soldier, young, and with a look of bright intelligence, is saying farewell to his mother at the door of a cottage. The old woman's face is lined ; her hands tremble. Her eyes peer up anxiously at the young man, as she fondles the sleeve of his tunic. He speaks confidently and cheerfully, and after a final embrace walks briskly away. The old woman enters the cottage and sits there, in silence and alone. She picks up a book the young man had been reading and very carefully places it in a drawer.)

THE WOMAN. An only child, and she a widow.

ANTHONY (looks very thoughtful). What of her son ?

THE WOMAN. His agony is greater. He feels all her grief and his own. She feels but her own, for his leave-taking deceived her, and she believes he has joy in battle.

ANTHONY (as if musing). Will men do so much to keep France ?

THE WOMAN (softly). They do much more. They know the issue is doubtful. They sacrifice so much, knowing the sacrifice may be in vain. (Anthony raises his head and looks very intently at The Woman ; she continues, her eyes glowing.) For years you have suffered on your rock. You suffer to save yourself. Jesus, your master, suffered to save the world. (She stretches out her arms and her voice rings with triumph.) I offer you greater suffering. He who suffers for me knows not the fruit of his suffering. I offer you the opportunity of the greatest sacrifice : the sacrifice of all, knowing that your all may be in vain.

(The Woman pauses, her arms outspread. Anthony presses his hands to his head, and remains silent for a long time. Then, taking a step forward, he places his right hand in that of The Woman. They slowly leave the ground. As they mount in the air the few retarded rays of light utterly vanish, and blackest night confounds the jutting rock with the starless heaven.)

THE OLD CONTEMPTIBLES: THE GOOD WORD.

BY BOYD CABLE.

It is quite inadequate to say that the troops were worn out, and indeed it is hard to find words to convey to anyone who has not experienced some days of a mixture of fighting and forced marching how utterly exhausted, how dead beat, how stupefied and numbed in mind and body the men were. For four days and nights they had fought and dug trenches and marched, and fought again, and halted to dig again, and fought again, and extricated themselves under hailing bullets and pouring shells from positions they never expected to leave alive, only to scramble together into some sort of ragged-shaped units and march again. And all this was under a fierce August sun, with irregular meals and sometimes no meals, at odd times with a scarcity or complete want of water, at all times with a burning lack and want of sleep.

This want of sleep was the worst of it all. Any sort of fighting is heavy sleep inducing; when it is prolonged for days and nights without one good full, satisfying sleep, the desire for rest becomes a craving, an all-absorbing aching passion. At first a man wants a bed or space to lie down and stretch his limbs and pillow his head and sink into dreamless oblivion; at last he would give his last possession merely to be allowed to lean against a wall, to stand upright on his feet and close his eyes. To keep awake is torture, to lift and move each foot is a desperate effort, to keep the burning eyes open and seeing an agony. It takes the most tremendous effort of will to contemplate another five minutes of wakefulness, another hundred yards to be covered; and here were hours, endless hours, of wakefulness, miles and tens of miles to be covered.

Cruelly hard as the conditions were for the whole retreating army, the rear-guard suffered the worst by a good deal. They were under the constant threat of attack, were halted every now and then under that threat or to allow the main body to keep a sufficient distance, had to make some attempt to dig in again, had to endure spasmodic shelling either in their shallow trenches or as they marched along the road.

By the fourth day the men were reduced to the condition of automatons. They marched—no, it could hardly be said any

longer that they 'marched'; they stumbled and staggered along like drunken men; their chins were sunk on their chests, their jaws hung slack, their eyes were set in a fixed and glassy stare, or blinked, and shut and opened heavily, slowly, and drowsily, their feet trailed draggingly, their knees sagged under them. When the word passed to halt, the front ranks took a minute or two to realise its meaning and obey, and the ranks behind bumped into them and raised heads and vacant staring eyes for a moment and let them drop again in a stupor of apathy. The change, the cessation of automatic motion was too much for many men; once halted they could no longer keep their feet, and dropped and sat or rolled helplessly to lie in the dust of the road. These men who fell were almost impossible to rouse. They sank into sleep that was almost a swoon, and no shaking or calling or cursing could rouse them or get them up again. The officers, knowing this, tried to keep them from sitting or lying down, moved, staggering themselves as they walked, to and fro along the line, exhorting, begging, beseeching, or scolding and swearing and ordering the men to keep up, to stand, to be ready to move on. And when the order was given again, the pathetically ridiculous order to 'Quick march,' the front ranks slowly roused and shuffled off, and the rear stirred slowly and with an effort heaved their rifles over their shoulders again and reeled after the leaders.

Scores of the men had abandoned packs and haversacks, all of them had cast away their overcoats. Many had taken their boots off and marched with rags or puttees wound round their blistered and swollen feet. But no matter what one or other or all had thrown away, there was no man without his rifle, his full ammunition pouches, and his bayonet. These things weighed murderously, cut deep and agonisingly into the shoulders, cramped arms and fingers to an aching numbness; but every man clung to them, had never a thought of throwing them into the ditch, although many of them had many thoughts of throwing themselves there.

Many fell out—fell out in the literal as well as the drill sense of the word; swerved to the side of the road and missed foot in the ditch and fell there, or stumbled in the ranks, tripped, lacking the brain or body quickness to recover themselves, collapsed, and rolled and lay helpless. Others, again, gasped a word or two to a comrade or an N.C.O., stumbled out of the ranks to the roadside, sank down with hanging head and rounded shoulders to a sitting position. Few or none of these men deliberately lay down. They sat till the

regiment had plodded his trailing length past, tried to stagger to knees and feet, succeeded, and stood swaying a moment, and then lurched off after the rear ranks ; or failed, stared stupidly after them, collapsed again slowly and completely. All these were left to lie where they fell. It was useless to urge them to move, because every officer and N.C.O. knew that no man gave up while he had an ounce of strength or energy left to carry on, that orders or entreaties had less power to keep a man moving than his own dogged pluck and will, that when these failed to keep a man going nothing else could succeed.

All were not, of course, so hopelessly done as this. There were still a number of the tougher muscled, the firmer willed, who kept their limbs moving with conscious volition, who still retained some thinking power, who even at times exchanged a few words or a mouthful of curses. These, and the officers, kept the whole together, kept them moving by force of example, set the pace for them and gave them the direction. Most of them were in the leading ranks of their own companies, merely because their greater energy had carried them there past and through the ranks of those whose minds were nearly or quite a blank, whose bodies were more completely exhausted, whose will-power was reduced to a blind and sheep-like instinct to follow a leader, move when and where the dimly seen khaki form or tramping boots in front of them moved, stop when and where they stopped.

The roads by which the army was retreating were cumbered and in places choked and blocked with fugitive peasantry fleeing from the advancing Germans, spurred into and upon their flight by the tales that reached them of ravished Belgium, by first-hand accounts of the murder of old men and women and children, of rape and violation and pillage and burning. Their slow, crawling procession checked and hindered the army transport, added to the trials of the weary troops by making necessary frequent halts and deviations off the road and back to it to clear some block in the traffic where a cart had broken down, or where worn-out women with hollow cheeks and staring eyes, and children with dusty, tear-streaked faces crowded and filled the road.

The rear-guard passed numbers of these lying utterly exhausted by the roadside, and the road for miles was strewn with the wreckage of the retreat, with men who had fallen out unable longer to march on blistered or bleeding feet or collapsed in the heedless sleep of complete exhaustion ; with broken-down carts dragged clear into

the roadside and spilled with their jumbled contents into the ditch ; with crippled horses and footsore cattle ; with quivering-lipped, grey-haired old men, and dry-eyed, cowering women, and frightened, clinging children. Some of these peasantry roused themselves as the last of the rear-guard regiments came up with them, struggled again to follow on the road, or dragged themselves clear of it and sought refuge and hiding in abandoned cottages or barns or the deep dry ditches.

At one point where the road crept up the long slope of a hill the rear-guard came under the long-range fire of the German guns. The shells came roaring down, to burst in clouds of belching black smoke in the fields to either side of the road, or to explode with a sharp tearing cr-r-rash in the air, their splinters and bullets raining down out of the thick white woolly smoke cloud that coiled and writhed and unfolded in slow heavy oily eddies.

One battalion of the rear-guard was halted at the foot of the hill and spread out off the road and across the line of it. Again they were told not to lie down, and for the most part the men obeyed, leaning heavily with their arms folded on the muzzles of their rifles or watching the regiments crawling slowly up the road with the coal-black shell-bursts in the fields about them or the white air-bursts of the shrapnel above them.

'Pretty bloomin' sight—I don't think,' growled a gaunt and weary-eyed private. The man next him laughed shortly. 'Pretty one for the Germs, anyway,' he said ; 'and one they're seein' a sight too often for my fancy. They'll be forgettin' wot our faces look like if we keep on at this everlastin' runnin' away.'

'Blast 'em,' said the first speaker savagely, 'but our turn will come presently. D'you think this yarn is right, Jacko, that we're retirin' this way just to draw 'em away from their base ?'

'Gawd knows,' said Jacko ; 'but they didn't bring us over 'ere to do nothin' but run away, an' you can bet on that, Peter.'

An order passed down the line, and the men began to move slowly into the road again and to shake into some sort of formation on it, and then to plod off up the hill in the wake of the rest. The shells were still plastering the hillside and crashing over the road, and several men were hit as the battalion tramped wearily up the hill. Even the shells failed to rouse most of the men from their apathy and weariness, but those it did stir it roused mainly to angry resentment or sullen oath-mumblings and curses.

'Well, Jacko,' said Peter bitterly, 'I've knowed I had a fair

chance o' bein' shot, but burn me if ever I thought I was goin' to be shot in the back.'

'It's a long way to Tipperary,' said Jacko, 'an' there's bound to be a turnin' in it somewheres.'

'An' it's a longer way to Berlin if we keeps on marchin' like this with our backs to it,' grumbled Peter.

The sound of another approaching shell rose from a faint moan to a loud shriek, to a roar, to a wild torrent of yelling, whooping, rush-of-an-express-train, whirlwind noise; and then, just when it seemed to each man that the shell was about to fall directly on his own individual head, it burst with a harsh crash over them, and a storm of bullets and fragments whistled and hummed down, hitting the fields' soft ground with deep *whutts*, clashing sharply on the harder road. A young officer jerked out a cry, stumbled blindly forward a few paces with outstretched arms, pitched, and fell heavily on his face. He was close to where Peter and Jacko marched, and the two shamled hastily together to where he lay, lifted and turned him over. Neither needed a second look. 'Done in,' said Peter briefly, and 'Never knew wot hit 'im,' agreed Jacko.

An officer ran back to them, followed slowly and heavily by another. There was no question as to what should be done with the lad's body. He had to be left there, and the utmost they could do for him was to lift and carry him—four dog-tired men hardly able to lift their feet and carry their own bodies—to a cottage by the roadside, and bring him into an empty room with a litter of clothes and papers spilled about the floor from the tumbled drawers, and lay him on a dishevelled bed and spread a crumpled sheet over him.

'Let's hope they'll bury him decently,' said one of the officers. The other was pocketing the watch and few pitiful trinkets he had taken from the lad's pockets. 'Hope so,' he said dully. 'Not that it matters much to poor old Dicky. Come on, we must move, or I'll never be able to catch the others up.'

They left the empty house quietly, pulling the door gently shut behind them.

'Pore little Blinker,' said Jacko as they trudged up the road after the battalion; 'the best bloomin' officer the platoon ever 'ad.'

'The best I ever 'ad in all my seven,' said Peter. 'I ain't forgettin' the way 'e stood up for me afore the C.O. at Aldershot when I was carpeted for drunk. And 'im tryin' to stand wi'

the right side of 'is face turned away from the light, so the C.O. wouldn't spot the black eye I gave 'im in that same drunk!'

'Ah, an' that was just like 'im,' said Jacko. 'An' to think 'e's washed out with a 'ole in the back of his 'ead—the back of it, mind you.'

Peter cursed sourly.

The battalion trailed wearily on until noon, halted then, and for the greater part flung themselves down and slept on the roadside for the two hours they waited there; were roused—as many of them, that is, as would rouse, for many, having stopped the machine-like motion of marching, could not recommence it, and had to be left there—and plodded on again through the baking afternoon heat. They had marched over thirty miles that day when at last they trailed into a small town where they were told they were to be billeted for the night. Other troops, almost as worn as themselves, were to take over the duties of rear-guard next day, but although that was good enough news it was nothing to the fact that to-night, now, the battalion was to halt and lie down and take their fill—if the Huns let them—of sleep.

They were halted in the main square and waited there for what seemed to the tired men an interminable time.

'Findin' billets,' said Jacko. 'Wish they'd hurry up about it.'

'Seems to me there's something more than billets in the wind,' said Peter suspiciously. 'Wot's all the officers confabbin' about, an' wot's that *tamasha* over there wi' them Staff officers an' the C.O.?''

The *tamasha* broke up, and the C.O. tramped back to the group of his officers, and after a short parley they saluted him and walked over to the battalion.

'Fall in,' came the order sharply. 'Fall in there, fall in.'

Most of the men were sitting along the curb of the pavement or in the dusty road, or standing leaning on their rifles. They rose and moved heavily and stiffly, and shuffled into line.

'Wot is it, sergeant?' asked Jacko suspiciously. 'Wot's the move?'

'We're goin' back,' said the sergeant. 'Hurry up there, you. Fall in. We're goin' back, an' there's some word of a fight.'

The word flew round the ranks. 'Going back . . . a fight . . . back . . .'

Across the square another regiment tramped stolidly and turned down a side street. A man in their rear ranks turned and waved a hand to the waiting battalion. 'So long, chums,' he called. 'See you in Berlin.'

'Ga' strewth,' said Jacko, and drew a deep breath. 'Goin' back; an' a fight; an' the ol' Buffs on the move too. In Berlin, eh; wonder wot they've 'eard. Back—blimey, Peter, I believe we're goin' for the blinkin' 'Uns again. I believe we're goin' to advance.'

That word went round even faster than the other, and where it passed it left behind it a stir of excitement, a straightening of rounded shoulders, a lifting of lolling heads. 'Going back . . . going to attack this time . . . going to advance. . . .'

Actually this was untrue, or partly so at least. They were going back, but still merely acting as rear-guard to take up a position clear of the town and hold it against the threat of too close-pressing pursuit. But the men knew nothing of that at the time. They were going back; there was word of a fight; what else did that spell but a finish to this cursed running away, an advance instead of a retreat? The rumour acted like strong wine to the men. They moved to the parade orders with something of their old drilled and disciplined appearance; they swung off in their fours with shuffling steps, it is true, but with a decent attempt to keep the step, with their heads more or less erect and their shoulders back. And when the head of the column turned off the square back into the same street they had come up into the town, a buzz of talk and calling ran through the ranks, a voice piped up shakily 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' and a dozen, a score, a hundred voices took up the chorus sturdily and defiantly. The battalion moved out with the narrow streets ringing to their steady tramp, tramp, over the *pavé* cobbles and the sound of their singing. Once clear of the town, it is true, the singing died away and the regular tramping march tailed off into the murmuring shuffle of feet moving out of step. But the deadly apathy had lifted from the men, there was an air of new life about them; one would never have known this battalion for the one that had marched in over the same road half an hour before. Then they were no more than a broken, dispirited crowd, their minds dazed, their bodies numbed with fatigue, moving mechanically, dully, apathetically, still plodding and shuffling their feet forward merely because their conscious minds had set their limbs the task, and then the tired brains, run down, had left the machinery of their bodies still working—working jerkily and slackly perhaps, but nevertheless working as it would continue to work until the overstrained muscles refused their mechanical duty.

Now they were a battalion, a knitted and coherent body of

fighting men, still worn out and fatigued almost to the point of collapse, but with working minds, with a conscious thought in their brains, with discipline locking their ranks again, with the prospect of a fight ahead, with the hope strong in them that the tide was turning, that they were done with the running away and retreating and abandoning hard-fought fields they were positive they had won; that now their turn was come, that here they were commencing and making the longed-for advance.

And as they marched they heard behind them a deep *boo-boom*, *boo-boom*, *boo-moom* and the whistling rush of the shells over their heads. That and the low muttering rumble of guns far out on the flank brought to them a final touch of satisfaction. They were advancing, and the guns were supporting them already then—good, oh good!

And as they marched back down the road they had come they met some of their stragglers hobbling painfully on bandaged feet, or picked them up from where they still lay in a stupor of sleep on the roadside. And to all of them the one word 'advance' was enough. 'We're going back . . . it's an advance,' turned them staggering round to limp back in the tail of the battalion, or lifted them to their feet to follow on as best they might. They picked up more than their own men, too, men of other regiments who had straggled and fallen out, but now drew fresh store of strength from the cheerful word 'advance,' and would not be denied their chance to be in the van of it, but tailed on in rear of the battalion and struggled to keep up with them. 'We're all right, sir,' said one when an officer would have turned him and sent him back to find his own battalion. 'We're pretty near done in on marching; but there's a plenty fight left in us—specially when it's an advance.'

'Jacko,' said Peter, 'I'm damn near dead; but thank the Lord I won't 'ave to die runnin' away.'

'All I asks,' said Jacko, 'is as fair a target on 'em as we've 'ad before, an' a chance to put a 'ole in the back o' some o' *their* 'eads.'

'Ah!' said Peter. 'Pore little Blinker. They've got to pay for 'im an' a few more like 'im.'

'They 'ave, blarst them,' said Jacko savagely, and dropped his hand to his bayonet haft, slid the steel half out and home again. 'Don't fret, chum, they'll pay—soon or late, this time or nex', one day or another—they'll pay.'

PRESS BUREAU: PASSED FOR PUBLICATION.

THE LOST NAVAL PAPERS.

BY BENNET COPPLESTONE.

I.

BAITING THE TRAP.

THIS story—which contains a moral for those fearful folk who exalt everything German—was told to me by Richard Cary, the accomplished naval correspondent of a big paper in the North of England. I have known him and his enthusiasm for the White Ensign for twenty years. He springs from an old naval stock, the Carys of North Devon, and has devoted his life to the study of the Sea Service. He had for so long been accustomed to move freely among shipyards and navymen, and was trusted so completely, that the veil of secrecy which dropped in August 1914 between the Fleets and the world scarcely existed for him. Everything which he desired to know for the better understanding of the real work of the Navy came to him officially or unofficially. When, therefore, he states that the Naval Notes with which this story deals would have been of incalculable value to the enemy, I accept his word without hesitation. I have myself seen some of them and they made me tremble—for Cary's neck. I pressed him to write this story himself, but he refused. 'No,' said he, 'I have told you the yarn just as it happened; write it yourself. I am a dull dog, quite efficient at handling hard facts and making scientific deductions from them, but with no eye for the picturesque details. I give it to you.' He rose to go—Cary had been lunching with me—but paused for an instant upon my front doorstep. 'If you insist upon it,' added he, smiling, 'I don't mind sharing in the plunder.'

It was in the latter part of May 1916. Cary was hard at work one morning in his rooms in the Northern City where he had established his headquarters. His study table was littered with papers—notes, diagrams, and newspaper cuttings—and he was laboriously reducing the apparent chaos into an orderly series of chapters upon the Navy's Work which he proposed to publish after the war was over. It was not designed to be an exciting book—Cary has no

dramatic instinct—but it would be full of fine sound stuff, close accurate detail, and clear analysis. Day by day for more than twenty months he had been collecting details of every phase of the Navy's operations, here a little and there a little. He had recently returned from a confidential tour of the shipyards and naval bases, and had exercised his trained eye upon checking and amplifying what he had previously learned. While his recollection of this tour was fresh he was actively writing up his Notes and revising the rough early draft of his book. More than once it had occurred to him that his accumulations of Notes were dangerous explosives to store in a private house. They were becoming so full and so accurate that the enemy would have paid any sum or have committed any crime to secure possession of them. Cary is not nervous or imaginative—have I not said that he springs from a naval stock?—but even he now and then felt anxious. He would, I believe, have slept peacefully though knowing that a delicately primed bomb lay beneath his bed, for personal risks troubled him little, but the thought that hurt to his country might come from his well-meant labours sometimes rapped against his nerves. A few days before his patriotic conscience had been stabbed by no less a personage than Admiral Jellicoe, who, speaking to a group of naval students which included Cary, had said: 'We have concealed nothing from you, for we trust absolutely to your discretion. Remember what you have seen, but do not make any notes.' Yet here at this moment was Cary disregarding the orders of a Commander-in-Chief whom he worshipped. He tried to square his conscience by reflecting that no more than three people knew of the existence of his Notes or of the book which he was writing from them, and that each one of those three was as trustworthy as himself. So he went on collating, comparing, writing, and the heap upon his table grew bigger under his hands.

The clock had just struck twelve upon that morning when a servant entered and said 'A gentleman to see you, sir, upon important business. His name is Mr. Dawson.'

Cary jumped up and went to his dining-room, where the visitor was waiting. The name had meant nothing to him, but the instant his eyes fell upon Mr. Dawson he remembered that he was the chief Scotland Yard officer who had come north to teach the local police how to keep track of the German agents who infested the shipbuilding centres. Cary had met Dawson more than once and had assisted him with his intimate local knowledge. He greeted

his visitor with smiling courtesy, but Dawson did not smile. His first words, indeed, came like shots from an automatic pistol.

‘Mr. Cary,’ said he, ‘I want to see your Naval Notes.’

Cary was staggered, for the three people whom I have mentioned did not include Mr. Dawson. ‘Certainly,’ said he, ‘I will show them to you if you ask officially. But how in the world did you hear anything about them?’

‘I am afraid that a good many people know about them, most undesirable people, too. If you will show them to me—I am asking officially—I will tell you what I know.’

Cary led the way to his study. Dawson glanced round the room, at the papers heaped upon the table, at the tall windows bare of curtains—Cary, who loved light and sunshine, hated curtains—and growled. Then he locked the door, pulled down the thick blue blinds required by the East Coast lighting orders, and switched on the electric lights though it was high noon in May. ‘That’s better,’ said he. ‘You are an absolutely trustworthy man, Mr. Cary. I know all about you. But you are damned careless. That bare window is overlooked from half a dozen flats. You might as well do your work in the street.’

Dawson picked up some of the papers, and their purport was explained to him by Cary. ‘I don’t know anything of naval details,’ said he, ‘but I don’t need any evidence of the value of the stuff here. The enemy wants it, wants it badly; that is good enough for me.’

‘But,’ remonstrated Cary, ‘no one knows of these papers, or of the use to which I am putting them, except my son in the Navy, my wife (who has not read a line of them), and my publisher in London.’

‘Hum!’ commented Dawson. ‘Then how do you account for this?’

He opened his leather despatch-case and drew forth a parcel carefully wrapped up in brown paper. Within the wrapping was a large white envelope of the linen woven paper used for registered letters, and generously sealed. To Cary’s surprise, for the envelope appeared to be secure, Dawson cautiously opened it so as not to break the seal which was adhering to the flap and drew out a second smaller envelope, also sealed. This he opened in the same delicate way and took out a third; from the third he drew a fourth, and so on until eleven empty envelopes had been added to the litter piled

upon Cary's table, and the twelfth, a small one, remained in Dawson's hands.

'Did you ever see anything so childish?' observed he, indicating the envelopes. 'A big, registered, sealed Chinese puzzle like that is just crying out to be opened. We would have seen the inside of that one even if it had been addressed to the Lord Mayor, and not to—well, someone in whom we are deeply interested, though he does not know it.'

Cary, who had been fascinated by the succession of sealed envelopes, stretched out his hand towards one of them. 'Don't touch,' snapped out Dawson. 'Your clumsy hands would break the seals, and then there would be the devil to pay. Of course all these envelopes were first opened in my office. It takes a dozen years to train men to open sealed envelopes so that neither flap nor seal is broken, and both can be again secured without showing a sign of disturbance. It is a trade secret.'

Dawson's expert fingers then opened the twelfth envelope and he produced a letter. 'Now, Mr. Cary, if we had not known you and also known that you were absolutely honest and loyal—though dangerously simple-minded and careless in the matter of windows—this letter would have been very awkward indeed for you. It runs: "Hagan arrives 10.30 P.M. Wednesday to get Cary's Naval Notes. Meet him. Urgent." Had we not known you, Mr. Richard Cary might have been asked to explain how Hagan knew all about his Naval Notes and was so very confident of being able to get them.'

Cary smiled. 'I have often felt,' said he, 'especially in war-time, that it was most useful to be well known to the police. You may ask me anything you like and I will do my best to answer. I confess that I am aghast at the searchlight of inquiry which has suddenly been turned upon my humble labours. My son at sea knows nothing of the Notes except what I have told him in my letters, my wife has not read a line of them, and my publisher is the last man to talk. I seem to have suddenly dropped into the middle of a detective story.' The poor man scratched his head and smiled ruefully at the Scotland Yard officer.

'Mr. Cary,' said Dawson, 'those windows of yours would account for anything. You have been watched for a long time, and I am perfectly sure that our friend Hagan and his associates here know precisely in what drawer of that desk you keep your naval papers. Your flat is easy to enter—I had a look round

before coming in to-day—and on Wednesday night (that is to-morrow) there will be a scientific burglary here and your Notes will be stolen.'

'Oh no they won't,' cried Cary. 'I will take them down this afternoon to my office and lock them up in the big safe. It will put me to a lot of bother, for I shall also have to lock up there the chapters of my book.'

'You newspaper men ought all to be locked up yourselves. You are a cursed nuisance to honest, hard-worked Scotland Yard men like me. But you mistake the object of my visit. I want this flat to be entered to-morrow night, and I want your naval papers to be stolen.'

For a moment the wild thought came to Cary that this man Dawson—the chosen of the Yard—was himself a German Secret Service agent, and must have shown in his eyes some signs of the suspicion, for Dawson laughed loudly. 'No, Mr. Cary, I am not in the Kaiser's pay, nor are you, though the case against you might be painted pretty black. This man Hagan is on our string in London and we want him very badly indeed. Not to arrest—at least not just yet—but to keep running round showing us his pals and all their little games. He is an Irish American, a very unbenevolent neutral, to whom we want to give a nice, easy, happy time, so that he can mix himself up thoroughly with the spy business and wrap a rope many times round his neck. We will pull on to the end when we have finished with him, but not a minute too soon. He is too precious to be frightened. Did you ever come across such an ass?'—Dawson contemptuously indicated the pile of sealed envelopes—'he must have soaked himself in American dime novels and cinema crime films. He will be of more use to us than a dozen of our best officers. I feel that I love Hagan and won't have him disturbed. When he comes here to-morrow night he shall be seen but not heard. He shall enter this room, lift your Notes, which shall be in their usual drawer, and shall take them safely away. After that I rather fancy that we shall enjoy ourselves, and that the salt will stick very firmly upon Hagan's little tail.'

Cary did not at all like this plan; it might offer amusement and instruction to the police, but seemed to involve himself in an excessive amount of responsibility. 'Will it not be far too risky to let him take my Notes even if you do shadow him closely afterwards? He will get them copied and scattered amongst a score of

agents, one of whom may get the information through to Germany. You know your job, of course, but the risk seems too big for me. After all, they are my Notes, and I would far sooner burn them now than that the Germans should see a line of them.'

Dawson laughed again. 'You are a dear simple soul, Mr. Cary; it does one good to meet you. Why on earth do you suppose I came here to-day if it were not to enlist your help? Hagan is going to take all the risks; you and I are not looking for any. He is going to steal some Naval Notes, but they will not be those which lie on this table. I myself will take charge of those and of the chapters of your most reprehensible book. You shall prepare, right now, a beautiful new artistic set of notes calculated to deceive. They must be accurate where any errors would be spotted, but wickedly false wherever deception would be good for Fritz's health. I want you to get down to a real plant. This letter shall be sealed up again in its twelve silly envelopes and go by registered post to Hagan's correspondent. You shall have till to-morrow morning to invent all those things which we want Fritz to believe about the Navy. Make us out to be as rotten as you plausibly can. Give him some heavy losses to gloat over and to tempt him out of harbour. Don't overdo it, but mix up your fiction with enough facts to keep it sweet and make it sound convincing. If you do your work well—and the Naval authorities here seem to think a lot of you—Hagan will believe in your Notes, and will try to get them to his German friends at any cost or risk, which will be exactly what we want of him. Then, when he has served our purpose, he will find that we—have—no—more—use—for—him.'

Dawson accompanied this slow, harmlessly sounding sentence with a grim and nasty smile. Cary, before whose eyes flashed for a moment the vision of a chill dawn, cold grey walls, and a silent firing party, shuddered. It was a dirty task to lay so subtle a trap even for a dirty Irish-American spy. His honest English soul revolted at the call upon his brains and knowledge, but common sense told him that in this way, Dawson's way, he could do his country a very real service. For a few minutes he mused over the task set to his hand, and then spoke.

'All right. I think that I can put up exactly what you want. The faked Notes shall be ready when you come to-morrow. I will give the whole day to them.'

In the morning the new set of Naval Papers was ready, and

their purport was explained in detail to Dawson, who chuckled joyously. 'This is exactly what Admiral — wants, and it shall get through to Germany by Fritz's own channels. I have misjudged you, Mr. Cary; I thought you little better than a fool, but that story here of a collision in a fog and the list of damaged Queen Elizabeths in dock would have taken in even me. Fritz will suck it down like cream. I like that effort even better than your grave comments on damaged turbines and worn-out gun tubes. You are a genius, Mr. Cary, and I must take you to lunch with the Admiral this very day. You can explain the plant better than I can, and he is dying to hear all about it. Oh, by the way, he particularly wants a description of the failure to complete the latest batch of big shell fuses, and the shortage of lyddite. You might get that done before the evening. Now for the burglary. Do nothing, nothing at all, outside your usual routine. Come home at your usual hour, go to bed as usual, and sleep soundly if you can. Should you hear any noise in the night put your head under the bedclothes. Say nothing to Mrs. Cary unless you are obliged, and for God's sake don't let any woman—wife, daughter, or maid-servant—disturb my pearl of a burglar while he is at work. He must have a clear run, with everything exactly as he expects to find it. Can I depend upon you?'

'I don't pretend to like the business,' said Cary, 'but you can depend upon me to the letter of my orders.'

'Good,' cried Dawson. 'That is all I want.'

II.

THE TRAP CLOSES.

Cary heard no noise though he lay awake for most of the night, listening intently. The flat seemed to be more quiet even than usual. There was little traffic in the street below, and hardly a step broke the long silence of the night. Early in the morning—at six B.S.T.—Cary slipped out of bed, stole down to his study, and pulled open the deep drawer in which he had placed the bundle of faked Naval Notes. They had gone! So the Spy-Burglar had come, and, carefully shepherded by Dawson's sleuth-hounds, had found the primrose path easy for his crime. To Cary, the simple, honest gentleman, the whole plot seemed to be utterly revolting

—justified, of course, by the country's needs in time of war, but none the less revolting. There is nothing of glamour in the Secret Service, nothing of romance, little even of excitement. It is a cold-blooded exercise of wits against wits, of spies against spies. The amateur plays a fish upon a line and gives him a fair run for his life, but the professional fisherman—to whom a salmon is a people's food—nets him coldly and expeditiously as he comes in from the sea.

Shortly after breakfast there came a call from Dawson on the telephone. 'All goes well. Come to my office as soon as possible.' Cary found Dawson bubbling with professional satisfaction. 'It was beautiful,' cried he. 'Hagan was met at the train, taken to a place we know of, and shadowed by us tight as wax. We now know all his associates—the swine have not even the excuse of being German. He burgled your flat himself while one of his gang watched outside. Never mind where I was; you would be surprised if I told you; but I saw everything. He has the faked papers, is busy making copies, and this afternoon is going down the river in a steamer to get a glimpse of the shipyards and docks and check your Notes as far as can be done. Will they stand all right?'

'Quite all right,' said Cary. 'The obvious things were given correctly.'

'Good. We will be in the steamer.'

Cary went that afternoon, quite unchanged in appearance by Dawson's order. 'If you try to disguise yourself,' declared that expert, 'you will be spotted at once. Leave the refinements to us.' Dawson himself went as an elderly dug-out officer with the rank marks of a colonel, and never spoke a word to Cary upon the whole trip down and up the teeming river. Dawson's men were scattered here and there—one a passenger of inquiring mind, another a deckhand, yet a third—a pretty girl in khaki—sold tea and cakes in the vessel's saloon. Hagan—who, Cary heard afterwards, wore the brass-bound cap and blue kit of a mate in the American merchant service—was never out of sight for an instant of Dawson or of one of his troupe. He busied himself with a strong pair of marine glasses and now and then asked innocent questions of the ship's deckhands. He had evidently himself once served as a sailor. One deckhand, an idle fellow to whom Hagan was very civil, told his questioner quite a lot of interesting details about the Navy ships, great and small, which could be seen upon the building slips. All these details tallied strangely with those recorded in

Cary's Notes. The trip up and down the river was a great success for Hagan and for Dawson, but for Cary it was rather a bore. He felt somehow out of the picture. In the evening Dawson called at Cary's office and broke in upon him. 'We had a splendid trip to-day,' said he. 'It exceeded my utmost hopes. Hagan thinks no end of your Notes, but he is not taking any risks. He leaves in the morning for Glasgow to do the Clyde and to check some more of your stuff. Would you like to come?' Cary remarked that he was rather busy, and that these river excursions, though doubtless great fun for Dawson, were rather poor sport for himself. Dawson laughed joyously—he was a cheerful soul when he had a spy upon his string. 'Come along,' said he. 'See the thing through. I should like you to be in at the death.' Cary observed that he had no stomach for cold damp dawns, and firing parties.

'I did not quite mean that,' replied Dawson. 'Those closing ceremonies are still strictly private. But you should see the chase through to a finish. You are a newspaper man and should be eager for new experiences.'

'I will come,' said Cary, rather reluctantly. 'But I warn you that my sympathies are steadily going over to Hagan. The poor devil does not look to have a dog's chance against you.'

'He hasn't,' said Dawson with great satisfaction.

Cary, to whom the wonderful Clyde was as familiar as the river near his own home, found the second trip almost as wearisome as the first. But not quite. He was now able to recognise Hagan, who again appeared as a brass-bounder, and did not affect to conceal his deep interest in the Naval panorama offered by the river. Nothing of real importance can, of course, be learned from a casual steamer trip, but Hagan seemed to think otherwise, for he was always either watching through his glasses or asking apparently artless questions of passengers or passing deckhands. Again a sailor seemed disposed to be communicative; he pointed out more than one monster in steel, red raw with surface rust, and gave particulars of a completed power which would have surprised the Admiralty Superintendent. They would not, however, have surprised Mr. Cary, in whose ingenious brain they had been conceived. This second trip, like the first, was declared by Dawson to have been a great success. 'Did you know me?' he asked. 'I was a clean-shaven Naval doctor, about as unlike the Army colonel of the first trip as a pigeon is unlike a gamecock. Hagan is off to London to-night by the North-Western. There are three

copies of your Notes. One is going by Edinburgh and the east coast, and another by the Midland. Hagan has the original master-piece. I will look after him and leave the two other messengers to my men. I have been on to the Yard by 'phone and have arranged that all three shall have passports for Holland. The two copies shall reach the Kaiser, bless him, but I really must have Hagan's set of Notes for my Museum.'

'And what will become of Hagan?' asked Cary.

'Come and see,' said Mr. Dawson.

Dawson entertained Cary at dinner in a private room at the Station Hotel, waited upon by one of his own confidential men. 'Nobody ever sees me,' he observed with much satisfaction, 'though I am everywhere.' (I suspect that Dawson is not without his little vanities.) 'Except in my office and with people whom I know well, I am always someone else. The first time I came to your house I wore a beard, and the second time looked like a gas inspector. You saw only the real Dawson. When one has got the passion for the chase in one's blood, one cannot bide for long in a stuffy office. As I have a jewel of an assistant, I can always escape and follow up my own victims. This man Hagan is a black heartless devil. Don't waste your sympathy on him, Mr. Cary. He took money from us quite lately to betray the silly asses of Sinn Feiners, and now, thinking us hoodwinked, is after more money from the Kaiser. He is of the type that would sell his own mother and buy a mistress with the money. He's not worth your pity. We use him and his like for just so long as they can be useful, and then the jaws of the trap close. By letting him take those faked Notes we have done a fine stroke for the Navy, for the Yard, and for Bill Dawson. We have got into close touch with four new German agents here and two more down south. We shan't seize them yet; just keep them hanging on and use them. That's the game. I am never anxious about an agent when I know him and can keep him watched. Anxious, bless you; I love him like a cat loves a mouse. I've had some spies on my string ever since the war began; I wouldn't have them touched or worried for the world. Their correspondence tells me everything, and if a letter to Holland which they haven't written slips in sometimes it's useful, very useful, as useful almost as your faked Notes.'

Half an hour before the night train was due to leave for the South, Dawson, very simply but effectively changed in appearance

—for Hagan knew by sight the real Dawson,—led Cary to the middle sleeping-coach on the train. ‘I have had Hagan put in No. 5,’ he said, ‘and you and I will take Nos. 4 and 6. No. 5 is an observation berth; there is one fixed up for us on this sleeping-coach. Come in here.’ He pulled Cary into No. 4, shut the door, and pointed to a small wooden knob set a few inches below the luggage rack. ‘If one unscrews that knob one can see into the next berth, No. 5. No. 6 is fitted in the same way, so that we can rake No. 5 from both sides. But, mind you, on no account touch those knobs until the train is moving fast and until you have switched out the lights. If No. 5 was dark when you opened the peep-hole, a ray of light from your side would give the show away. And unless there was a good deal of vibration and rattle in the train you might be heard. Now cut away to No. 6, fasten the door, and go to bed. I shall sit up and watch, but there is nothing for you to do.’

Hagan appeared in due course, was shown into No. 5 berth, and the train started. Cary asked himself whether he should go to bed as advised or sit up reading. He decided to obey Dawson’s orders, but to take a look in upon Hagan before settling down for the journey. He switched off his lights, climbed upon the bed, and carefully unscrewed the little knob which was like the one shown to him by Dawson. A beam of light stabbed the darkness of his berth, and putting his eye with some difficulty to the hole—one’s nose gets so confoundedly in the way—he saw Hagan comfortably arranging himself for the night. The spy had no suspicion of his watchers on both sides, for, after settling himself in bed, he unwrapped a flat parcel, and took out a bundle of blue papers which Cary at once recognised as the originals of his stolen Notes. Hagan went through them—he had put his suit-case across his knees to form a desk—and carefully made marginal jottings. Cary, who had often tried to write in trains, could not but admire the man’s laborious patience. He painted his letters and figures over and over again, in order to secure distinctness, in spite of the swaying of the train, and frequently stopped to suck the point of his pencil.

‘I suppose,’ thought Cary, ‘that Dawson yonder is just gloating over his prey, but for my part I feel an utterly contemptible beast. Never again will I set a trap for even the worst of my fellow-creatures.’ He put back the knob, went to bed, and passed half the night in extreme mental discomfort and the other half

in snatching brief intervals of sleep. It was not a pleasant journey.

Dawson did not come out of his berth at Euston until after Hagan had left the station in a taxicab, much to Cary's surprise, and then was quite ready, even anxious, to remain for breakfast at the hotel. He explained his strange conduct. 'Two of my men,' said he, as he wallowed in tea and fried soles—one cannot get Dover soles in the weary North—who travelled in ordinary compartments, are after Hagan in two taxis, so that if one is delayed the other will keep touch. Hagan's driver also has had a police warning, so that our spy is in a barbed-wire net. I shall hear before very long all about him.'

Cary and Dawson spent the morning at the hotel with a telephone beside them; every few minutes the bell would ring, and a whisper of Hagan's movements steal over the wires into the ears of the spider Dawson. He reported progress to Cary with ever-increasing satisfaction.

'Hagan has applied for and been granted a passport to Holland, and has booked a passage in the boat which leaves Harwich to-night for the Hook. We will go with him. The other two spies, with the copies, haven't turned up yet, but they are all right. My men will see them safe across into Dutch territory, and make sure that no blundering Customs officer interferes with their papers. This time the way of transgressors shall be very soft. As for Hagan, he is not going to arrive.'

'I don't quite understand why you carry on so long with him,' said Cary, who, though tired, could not but feel intense interest in the perfection of the police system and in the serene confidence of Dawson. The Yard could, it appeared, do unto the spies precisely what Dawson chose to direct.

'Hagan is an American citizen,' explained Dawson. 'If he had been a British subject I would have taken him at Euston—we have full evidence of the burglary, and of the stolen papers in his suit-case. But as he is a damned unbenevolent neutral, and the American Government is very touchy, we must prove his intention to sell the papers to Germany. Then we can deal with him by secret court-martial, and President Wilson can go to blazes. The journey to Holland will prove this intention. Hagan has been most useful to us in Ireland, and now in the North of England and in Scotland, but he is too enterprising and too daring to be left any longer on the string. I will draw the ends together at the Hook.'

'I did not want to go to Holland,' said Cary to me, when telling his story. 'I was utterly sick and disgusted with the whole cold-blooded game of cat and mouse, but the police needed my evidence about the Notes and the burglary, and did not intend to let me slip out of their clutches. Dawson was very civil and pleasant, but I was in fact as tightly held upon his string as was the wretched Hagan. So I went on to Holland with that quick-change artist, and watched him come on board the steamer at Parkeston Quay, dressed as a rather German-looking commercial traveller, eager for war commissions upon smuggled goods. This sounds absurd, but his get-up seemed somehow to suggest the idea. Then I went below. Dawson always kept away from me whenever Hagan might have seen us together.'

The passage across to Holland was free from incident; there was no sign that we were at war, and Continental traffic was being carried serenely on, within easy striking distance of the German submarine base at Zeebrugge. The steamer had drawn in to the Hook beside the train, and Hagan was approaching the gangway, suit-case in hand. The man was on the edge of safety; once upon Dutch soil, Dawson could not have laid hands upon him. He would have been a neutral citizen in a neutral country, and no English warrant would run against him. But between Hagan and the gangway suddenly interposed the tall form of the ship's captain; instantly the man was ringed about by officers, and before he could say a word or move a hand he was gripped hard and led across the deck to the steamer's chart-house. Therein sat Dawson, the real, undisguised Dawson, and beside him sat Richard Cary. Hagan's face, which two minutes earlier had been glowing with triumph and with the anticipation of German gold beyond the dreams of avarice, went white as chalk. He staggered and gasped as one stabbed to the heart, and dropped into a chair. His suit-case fell from his relaxed fingers to the floor.

'Give him a stiff brandy-and-soda,' directed Dawson, almost kindly, and when the victim's colour had ebbed back a little from his overcharged heart, and he had drunk deep of the friendly cordial, the detective put him out of pain. The game of cat and mouse was over.

'It is all up, Hagan,' said the detective gently. 'Face the music and make the best of it, my poor friend. This is Mr. Richard Cary, and you have not for a moment been out of our sight since you left London for the north four days ago.'

When I had completed the writing of his story I showed the MS. to Richard Cary, who was pleased to express a general approval. 'Not at all bad, Copplesstone,' said he, 'not at all bad. You have clothed my dry bones in real flesh and blood. But you have missed what to me is the outstanding feature of the whole affair, that which justifies to my mind the whole rather grubby business. Let me give you two dates. On May 25 two copies of my faked Notes were shepherded through to Holland and reached the Germans; on May 31 was fought the Battle of Jutland. Can the brief space between these dates have been merely an accident? I cannot believe it. No, I prefer to believe that in my humble way I induced the German Fleet to issue forth and to risk an action which, under more favourable conditions for us, would have resulted in their utter destruction. I may be wrong, but I am happy in retaining my faith.'

'What became of Hagan?' I asked, for I wished to bring the narrative to a clean artistic finish.

'I am not sure,' answered Cary, 'though I gave evidence as ordered by the court-martial. But I rather think that I have here Hagan's epitaph.' He took out his pocket-book, and drew forth a slip of paper upon which was gummed a brief newspaper cutting. This he handed to me, and I read as follows:

The War Office announces that a prisoner who was charged with espionage and recently tried by court-martial at the Westminster Guildhall was found guilty and sentenced to death. The sentence was duly confirmed and carried out yesterday morning.

THREE GENERATIONS.

OUT in the quiet paddock, with the mellow brick walls screening them from the common life in Bushey Park, they are browsing gently through the last days of their existence. It is not so many years since, gay with trappings, led by a groom apiece to restrain their Hanoverian tempers, these old cream-coloured horses drew the wonderful glass coach through the streets of London, haughtily accepting for themselves the acclamations of the people. At how many pageants, could they but tell us, have they not assisted? Are they old enough to have drawn Queen Victoria to her Diamond Jubilee, and did they drag that heavy gun-carriage with its pathetically small burden through the mourning streets on a Queen's last journey? Certainly in their own estimation they were the central figures on the chilly August day when they at last carried King Edward to Westminster Abbey amid the joyous thanksgiving of a whole Empire. Their reminiscences would not probably take them very far into the present reign. It must be some little time since the next generation callously ousted them from between the royal shafts, stripped them once for all of their gay trappings, and set them on a back shelf of history.

So now they browse and slumber among the buttercups, and perhaps wonder vaguely at their unshorn and generally disordered condition, and at their prolonged days of idleness. They know and care nothing about the war. They are aliens who have no need to be registered, naturalised as they have been by long generations of royal service. For it is just two hundred years since the first George, in a spirit of arrogance which, as a race, they appear to have assimilated, brought their ancestors from Hanover to draw his royal coach in his adopted country.

They came with those ill-featured ladies who, according to tradition, gave the name to the *Frog Walk* outside the Palace walls—yes, *outside*—and the creams had nothing to do with them. Never, in the course of their aristocratic history, have they drawn anything but crowned heads and their most legitimate spouses, and for this the British nation reveres and respects them. And now these, their descendants in the paddock, have done with streets and crowds and uniforms—and even with sovereigns. Sometimes one old fellow will lift his head at the sound of the children's cries

on the swings in the Park, and wonder if he is once more being cheered by the populace, but his dim eyes can only see the chestnuts hanging out their red and white candles, and a crow laughs at him from the wall. By his side his comrades, wholly unmoved, with hanging heads and slowly switching tails, are busy cropping the sweet grass, with no thought beyond it. Old age does sometimes, in spite of evidence to the contrary, broaden and mellow the sympathies, and the Cream Colours, who have been above all things exclusive, have developed a very soft spot in their hearts for the old bay horse who shares their paddock. Possibly he, who, whatever he has done in private life, in royal processions has never aspired beyond princesses, knows how to keep his place. At all events, when a sudden spurt of renewed activity will carry him at a gallant pace across the paddock, the august Three will follow him at a feeble canter and with anxious whinnies, until at last, finding him on the other side, they will happily nuzzle their noses into his neck, with every sign of equine affection, which he must accept with mingled pride and resignation. Is he not the *enfant gâté de la maison*?

Well, their great days are over, but they could have found no more dignified place of retirement than under the royal shadow of Hampton Court Palace, the accepted home of retirement and dignity.

Meantime, out in the road, could they but know it, their successors on these summer mornings are taking part in a strange, rather pathetic mimicry of those greater pageants which have no place in war-time. For the Cream Colours of to-day cannot be allowed to idle like their parents. Much may yet, we hope, be expected of them, and they must not forget the manner of that service to which alone they owe their existence. So in the early morning, when trams are few and other traffic is non-existent, they may be met, eight of them, stepping proudly along, with arched necks and haughty expressions, quite unaware that the grooms holding to their bridles are in mufti, that their trappings are of plain wood, and that the royal coach they imagine to be rumbling behind them resembles nothing so much as an empty jail van! The King in the fairy tale was not better pleased with his imaginary fine raiment than the Cream Colours with their phantom state. But nobody troubles to undeceive them; the rooks flap cawing overhead in pursuit of their breakfasts, and the cuckoo monotonously calling from the Home Park is entirely

absorbed in his own business. All is vanity, and in another few years they also will be cropping buttercups, with no higher aspiration.

For the next generation is already knocking at the door. On the further side of the road from his forebears, a little dusky foal who will some day be of a correct highly polished cream colour is kicking up his heels in a paddock, a truly royal nursery with a golden floor. He is separated even at this early age from his black and bay contemporaries, whose lot, however, will certainly be more varied and interesting than any which he can look for. Let us hope that he may still be in the nursery when his sleek elders, now disappearing in their own dust along the road, will draw their sovereign in state to return thanks for the greatest of all victories, and the establishment of a righteous peace throughout the world.

ROSE M. BRADLEY.

ARMY UNIFORMS, PAST AND PRESENT.

BY THE RT. HON. SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, BT.

IN the early 'seventies of last century there was staged in London a very amusing musical comedy called *The Happy Land*, the scene being laid in Paradise. Among the principal characters were extremely skilful and poignant burlesques of Mr. Gladstone, Prime Minister at the time, Mr. Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Ayrton, First Commissioner of Works. The piece had but a short, though brilliant, run in the metropolis; for the Lord Chamberlain ordered it off the stage, not on the grounds of what is usually implied by immorality, but because it brought Her Majesty's Ministers into contempt by mordant caricature of their features and action.¹ It is not known—to me, at least—which of the three victims set the censorship in motion. Certainly it was not 'Bob' Lowe, who was gifted with a fine strain of humour. Probably it was done at Mr. Ayrton's instance, he being destitute of that saving grace, and, besides, having been more mercilessly satirised in the play than his colleagues. He had outraged public feeling, if not public taste, by some acts of his administration as edile, notably by painting grey some of the fine stone-work in the lobbies of the Houses of Parliament. I forget the libretto of *The Happy Land*; but this much I remember, that, whereas in the first act the scenery of Paradise appeared glowing with rainbow radiance and shimmering with gems, in the second act it represented the effect of Ayrton's régime—everything had been painted 'government grey.'

All this was brought to mind by the change wrought upon the appearance of the British Army after the outbreak of the South African war in 1899. By a wave of his wand or a scratch of his quill the Secretary of State for War, Mr. St. John Brodrick (now Viscount Midleton) quenched all gaiety of colour in the fighting dress of our troops; the historic thin red line was to be seen no more; the glittering squadrons were doomed to ride in raiment as sombre as the dust of their own raising; henceforward standards and regimental colours were to be returned to store before the troops went on active service.

¹ The piece continued to be given in the provinces, where the Lord Chamberlain's censorship does not take effect.

Had that been all, it would have sufficed to mark a notable era in the operations of war—a wise measure, imposed upon the Army Council by the vast improvement in the range, trajectory, and precision of artillery and small arms. Hitherto it had been the object of the military authorities of all nations to make their fighting men as conspicuous as possible, exaggerating their stature by fantastic headgear and setting them in strong relief to every variety of natural background by means of bright colours and pipeclay. The Brigade of Guards landed in the Crimea without their knapsacks, which followed in another ship. The men had to do without them for some weeks ; but the cumbrous bearskin caps were considered indispensable, and offered a fine target for the Russian defenders of the slopes of the Alma. The hint was thrown away upon our military authorities. It required a sharper lesson to convince them of the cruel absurdity of figging out men for battle in a dress that hampered the limbs and obscured the eyesight. The Guards were not more absurdly dressed on that occasion than the rest of the British troops. The late Sir William Flower described to me his feelings when, as surgeon of an infantry regiment, he stepped out from a boat on the wet sands at the mouth of the Alma, dressed in a skin-tight scarlet coatee with swallow tails, a high collar enclosing a black stock, close-fitting trousers tightly strapped over Wellington boots, and a cocked hat!

Two years before that—in 1852—Colonel Luard published his *History of the Dress of the British Soldier*. Having served as a heavy dragoon in the Peninsula, as a light dragoon at Waterloo, as a lancer in India, and as a staff officer both in India and at home, he had practical experience of the variety of torment inflicted by different kinds of uniform. He advocated many reforms in the soldier's dress, tending as much to increased efficiency as to comfort, and he supported his argument by extracts from his correspondence with regimental officers. One of these wrote—'If an infantry soldier has to step over a drain two feet broad, he has to put one hand to his cap to keep it on his head, and his other to his pouch, and what becomes of his musket?' And this, be it remembered, was the fighting-kit ; for no general in those days ever dreamed of taking troops into action except in full review order.

James I. was not a warlike king, but he was a pretty shrewd observer of men and matters. He was not far wrong when he observed that plate armour was a fine thing, for it not only protected the life of the wearer, but hindered him from hurting anybody else!

The remark might have been applied with equal justice to the costume of British soldiers in the Crimean campaign, except that it afforded no protection to the wearer's life or limb. It required nearly one hundred years of painful experience to convince the War Office that it was cruel stupidity to put men in the field in clothing so tight as to fetter the limbs and compress the chest. That was the legacy of George IV. to the British Army.

Although, to one looking back over the history of what is now the United Kingdom, the most salient features seem to be campaigns and battles, invasion and counter-invasion, it was not until the Civil War that any attempt was made towards a uniform dress for any army. It is true that both the English and Scottish Parliaments from time to time prescribed with the utmost care the offensive and defensive armour with which every able-bodied subject was to provide himself or be provided by his feudal chief, and if that chief were a wealthy baron his following would be clothed in his liveries. Thus, in describing the famous scene at Lauder when Archibald Douglas, fifth Earl of Angus, won his sobriquet of Bell-the-Cat, Pitscottie tells us in deliciously quaint phrase how luckless Thomas Cochrane, newly created Earl of Mar, rode down to the kirk where the disaffected lords were in conference, at the head of three hundred men all dressed in his liveries of white doublets with black bands. Cromwell was the first ruler of England who succeeded in what several of his predecessors had failed—in maintaining a standing army. At one time he had 80,000 men under arms. There was a degree of uniformity in the dress of his cavalry and infantry. It consisted mainly of buff coats, with the addition of breast and back pieces, iron caps, and other defensive armour. But that army was disbanded after the Restoration, and it was not until the reign of William III. that a standing army was finally constituted, and colonels commanding regiments, being allowed a sufficient sum for clothing the men, were required to do so according to sealed pattern.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the British soldier's dress was, on the whole, both picturesque and comfortable. In cut, it conformed pretty faithfully to the fashion prevailing in civilian attire, though there occurred an interval when George II. inflicted upon his Guards regiments the preposterous conical head-dress, copied from the Prussian Guards of Frederick the Great. This disfiguring headgear did not last very long, and gave place before

the end of the century to the three-cocked hat of the style called, I believe, Nivernois or Kevenhüller.

The easy grace of the full-dress uniform of an officer of the Guards towards the close of the eighteenth century is admirably shown in Romney's portrait of John, tenth Earl of Westmorland, now at Osterley Park. It shows a long-skirted scarlet frock, lined with white, faced with blue, with ruffles at the wrists, and without any ornament save a pair of gilt epaulets of moderate size and soft material, very different from the cumbrous, unyielding things now prescribed for naval officers and lords-lieutenant. The frock is worn open over a Ramillies cravat and waistcoat and breeches of white kersey. It would be difficult to devise a dress for a soldier so well combining comfort and dignified distinction. To one feature only can objection be taken. The powdered and curled hair, clubbed in a pigtail, looks charming on Romney's canvas, but must have proved an intolerable nuisance both to officers and men.

'During the command of the late Duke of Kent at Gibraltar [1802-3], when a field-day was ordered, there not being sufficient barbers in the town to attend to all the officers in the morning, the seniors claimed the privilege of their rank; the juniors consequently were obliged to have their heads dressed the night before; and to preserve the beauty of this artistic arrangement—pomatumed, powdered, curled and clubbed—these poor fellows were obliged to sleep on their faces! It is said that in the adjutant's office of each regiment there was kept a pattern of the correct curls, to which the barbers could refer.'¹

The men wore tunics of a cut similar to those of the officers, but of coarser cloth. They were buttoned up on duty, the skirts being looped back. It was a thoroughly sensible and workmanlike dress, giving perfect freedom to breathing and circulation, together with protection to loins and thighs. The Chelsea pensioners wear a coat of the old infantry pattern to this day.

With the Regency came a vicious change. The Prince Regent paid incessant attention to dress—both to his own and that of others. He was proud of his figure, which, indeed, was a fine one till it was ruined by excess, and he loved to display it in closely fitting dress. Nor was he content until he got his father's army buttoned up to the limit of endurance and disfigured by headgear

¹ *A History of the Dress of the British Soldier*, by Lieut.-Col. John Luard, 1852, p. 99.

of appalling dimensions. The easy open collar and Ramillies tie were replaced by an upright fence of buckram and a leather stock. It would be hardly credible, were there not abundant evidence in the correspondence of the Horse Guards to prove it, that while Wellington was absorbed in manœuvring against immensely superior forces in Spain, he had to give attention to correspondence about changes in the dress of the army, not with a view to making it more comfortable and workmanlike, but in order to gratify the caprice of the Prince Regent. No man ever gave less thought to niceties of tailoring than Lord Wellington (as he was at that time). His views are set forth in a letter to the Military Secretary who had consulted him about the uniform to be prescribed for those regiments of Light Dragoons which the Prince Regent had desired the Duke of York (recently reinstated as Commander-in-Chief) to convert into Hussars.

‘FRENEDA, 6th November, 1811.

‘ . . . There is no subject of which I understand so little [as military uniforms], and, abstractedly speaking, I think it indifferent how a soldier is clothed, provided it is in an uniform manner, and that he is forced to keep himself clean and smart, as a soldier ought to be. But there is one thing I deprecate, and that is any imitation of the French in any manner. It is impossible to form an idea of the inconvenience and injury which result from having anything like them, either on horseback or on foot.¹ Lutyens and his piquet were taken in June because the 3rd Hussars had the same caps as the French *Chasseurs-à-cheval* and some of their Hussars, and I was near being taken on September 25 from the same cause. At a distance or in action colours are nothing; the profile and shape of a man’s cap, and his general appearance, are what guide us; and why should we make our people look like the French? . . . I only beg that we may be as different as possible from the French in everything. The narrow tops of our infantry, as opposed to their broad top caps, are a great advantage to those who are to look at long lines of posts opposed to each other.’

Two years later, at the battle of Vitoria, the justice of Wellington’s views about the soldier’s uniform received apt illustration. Wellington on that day kept the Light Division and 4th Division under his immediate command. The 3rd and 7th Divisions, under Picton and Lord Dalhousie, were to join him in order to complete

¹ Of course because the French were the enemy in that campaign.

the centre of the line, but they had difficult ground to traverse, and were late. The Zadora flowed swift and deep in front of the French position. A countryman having informed Wellington that the bridge of Tres Puentes was unguarded, Kempt's riflemen were sent forward to seize it, which they did, and went so far up the heights on the farther side that they were able to establish themselves in shelter of a crest well in rear of a French advanced post. There they lay, until Wellington's line was completed by the arrival of 'old Picton, riding at the head of the 3rd Division, dressed in a blue coat and a round hat, swearing as loudly all the way as if he wore two cocked ones.'¹ The 7th Division came up at the same time, and while they were deploying the enemy opened fire upon them. Kempt immediately drew his riflemen from their shelter and took the French batteries in flank, thereby enabling the 3rd Division to cross the bridge of Mendoza without loss. But the dark uniforms of the Rifles deceived the British on the other side of the river into the belief that they were French. A battery opened upon them and continued pounding them with round shot and shrapnel till the advance of Picton's Division revealed the blunder.

Wellington's warning against copying the uniforms of other nations received little attention. After 1815, when he was in command of the Army of Occupation in Paris, it was decided to arm four regiments of cavalry with lances, a most effective weapon which had not been carried by British troops since the seventeenth century. One would have supposed that the lance might be wielded as effectively by a man dressed as a light dragoon or a hussar as in any other rig; but the Prince Regent hailed the innovation as an opportunity for an entirely new costume. Consequently the 9th, 12th, 16th and 23rd Light Dragoons were put into a Polish dress, modified in such manner as to agree with his Royal Highness's sartorial taste.

'An officer of rank commanding one of the Lancer regiments was ordered to attend the Prince Regent to fit the new jacket on him. The tailor, with a pair of scissors, was ordered to cut smooth every wrinkle and fine-draw the seams. The consequence was that the coats of the private soldiers, as well as those of the officers, were made so tight they could hardly get into them; the freedom of action was so restricted that the infantry with difficulty handled their muskets, and the cavalry could scarcely do the sword exercise.'

¹ Kincaid's *Adventures in the Rifle Brigade*, 2nd edition, 1838, p. 222.

The cuirass had been discontinued in the British cavalry since 1794, when it had been found most unsuitable for active service in the Netherlands. But it was far too showy a piece of goods to escape the Prince Regent's attention. Accordingly the three regiments of Household Cavalry were made to appear at his coronation in 1820 in steel cuirasses and burnished helmets, with enormous combs of bearskin ; the latter, as Colonel Luard caustically observes, rendering it impossible for a man to deliver the sixth cut in the sword exercise of that day. The cuirass and helmet remain, with the unwieldy jack-boots and leather breeches, an effective, if archaic, part of a theatrical pageant which Londoners have learnt to love ; but as the equipment of a modern soldier the costume is ludicrously inapt and very costly. In an era when war has become more terrible and more intensely destructive than in any previous age, and at a time when the whole resources of the nation are strained for the country to hold its own, it may well be asked whether money might not be more profitably employed than in causing the splendid men of the Household Cavalry to masquerade in such attire as would be grotesque to imagine them wearing in modern warfare.

About the same time that the cuirass was inflicted upon the Household Cavalry, the sentry boxes in London and at Windsor Castle had to be increased in height in order to accommodate a new pattern of bearskin cap which had been approved for the Foot Guards. The old pattern, which had superseded the three-cocked hat at the end of the previous century, was a sensible affair of reasonable dimensions ; but the army tailors, encouraged by the new King, were indefatigable in devising extravagance in uniforms, and the bearskin was made to shoot up several inches in height. 'Ridicule,' observed Colonel Luard, 'subsides when the eye is no longer a stranger to the object of excitement ; otherwise the little boys would run after the guardsmen when they appear in the streets of London, and shout at the overwhelming, preposterous, hideous bearskin caps.' It is rumoured that the supply of the right sort of bear is now running short. It may not be too much to hope that, when our armies return victorious at the end of the war, the occasion may be marked by the invention of some uniform for the Brigade of Guards more comfortable and workmanlike than a skin-tight tunic and a grossly exaggerated fur-cap. Londoners, laudably conservative in what they have become used with, would be the less likely to murmur at the change, inasmuch as they have grown accustomed to see guard-mounting performed in forage-caps.

Among all the variety of uniforms of the British infantry, none has undergone so little change in the last hundred and fifty years as that of the Highland regiments. Well that it is so, for there is none other that so admirably sets off a soldier-like figure, none that stirs so much enthusiasm among the spectators at a field-day. So fully has this been recognised that a society has recently been formed to protest against and endeavour to remedy what is deemed the unmerited neglect of Lowland Scottish regiments, whereof the records certainly are no whit inferior in lustre to those of the Highland corps. It is complained that the Lowland regiments are always kept in the background; that Edinburgh, though a Lowland city, is invariably garrisoned by a Highland regiment, and that facilities for recruiting in Edinburgh and Glasgow are accorded to Highland regiments and refused to Lowland regiments. Much of this is unfortunately true; but the real reason for it exists in the greater popularity of the Highland uniform. No amount of protest or persuasion will prevail to make the general public take the same interest in a trousered regiment as in a kilted one. Might not the surest remedy be to put the Lowland regiments also into kilts? Purists will object that Lowlanders have no business to don the philabeg; but, for that matter, neither have they any business to wear tartan trews, *which all the Lowland regiments do at the present time, besides being furnished with kilted pipers*.¹ Then all Scottish regiments would be on an equal footing, and no material would remain for the present irritation. It is difficult to understand, impossible to explain, the emotion—involuntary, as all true emotion must be—roused, even in Saisneach breasts, by the sight of a Highland regiment marching to the skirl of the pipes. In order to illustrate it, let me lapse for a moment into the first person singular.

During Queen Victoria's memorable progress through her metropolis in the Diamond Jubilee of 1897, I was seated with two ladies of my family in the stand set up for members of Parliament in Palace Yard. The long hours of waiting on that shining summer forenoon were enlivened by the march of many regiments, headed by their bands, passing to their appointed places in the route. It was a shifting pageant of stirring sight and sound. Presently, over Westminster Bridge came the Seaforth Highlanders stepping to the lively strains of *The Muckin' o' Geordie's Byre*.² The effect

¹ See report of meeting of the Lowland Scots Society, held in Edinburgh on November 25, 1915.

² An old air, subsequently set to the song *My Tocher's the Jewel*.

was indescribable—the swing of kilts and sporrans, the dark waving plumes, the gallant but simple melody, thrilled all spectators. As for myself, I felt a big lump in my throat, and I was ashamed to feel something trickle down both cheeks. Yet am I a Lowland Scot, if anybody is ; so far as I am aware, I can lay no claim to any strain of Celtic blood. If such an one was so deeply moved by the passing of a single Highland regiment, why should not all the Scottish regiments be clothed in the romantic garb of Old Gaul, with the desirable result of rendering the Lowland corps as well-beloved by the people as the Highlanders ? If this were carried out, it would be esteemed a privilege by the former and a compliment by the latter. Objection on the score of economy would be raised because of the cost of the full-dress feather-bonnet, which, though picturesque, is but a tailor's parody of the bonnet of the *duine uasail*. Let the Lowland regiments be content, then, with the Glengarry. Nobody who has seen a battalion of the London Scottish marching through Pall Mall, and listened to the comments of those who crowd to the club windows at the sound of the pibroch, will tell you that that fine corps would gain anything in soldierly appearance by wearing feather-bonnets. That head-dress was condemned in 1882, but in deference to Queen Victoria's wishes it was restored. Its abolition had previously been hotly challenged in the House of Commons by certain perfervid Scots, one of whom volunteered a quaint explanation to an honourable member who had ventured to express some doubt about ostrich feathers being an appropriate ornament for a Scottish soldier. He gravely assured the House that the costume had its origin in Sir Ralph Abercromby's Egyptian campaign in 1801, when the Highland soldiers picked up ostrich feathers in the desert and stuck them in their bonnets as a protection from the sun !

The fact is that the feather-bonnet, and all other exaggerated and expensive head-dresses, should be as resolutely relegated to limbo as the hideous masks worn by the fighting men of Old Japan. Both were designed to overawe the enemy ; but, as modern fighting is done in forage-caps, that naïve purpose cannot be carried into effect, and the object should be to provide such clothing as will best enable a man to keep himself, in the Duke of Wellington's words, 'clean and smart, as a soldier ought to be.' And no head-gear is smarter, none more easily kept clean, than the Glengarry bonnet.

While it is hardly possible to imagine any dress better calculated

to impede a soldier's movements than the uniforms inflicted upon all arms in the service during the early years of the nineteenth century, one should not overlook the relief that was ordained in a detail that was a source of constant unnecessary trouble to the soldier. Clubbed pigtails had been transmitted as an irksome legacy from Marlborough's army, until in 1808 the Horse Guards decreed their abolition. When Sir Arthur Wellesley landed in Mondego Bay on August 1-5 in that year, one of his first orders was that these senseless, dirty appendages were to be cut off. Never, one may believe, was an order more cheerfully obeyed. A counter-order was issued shortly after from the Horse Guards, requiring the retention of pigtails, but it was beyond the power of man to comply with it. It was easy to cut off pigtails, but they could not be replaced; and now the only vestige of a barbarous fashion in the army remains in the bow of black ribbon worn by the Welsh Fusiliers at the back of the collar of the tunic.

Unfortunately, the irrational fashion of tight clothing for the army instituted by the Prince Regent endures to this day. It is true that a sensible field-dress of khaki was devised and worn during the South African War, and is now the service dress of the army; but the full dress for officers and the 'walking-out' uniform for men is still cut and fitted on the old excruciating lines. I think it took three weeks to fit a young friend of mine, joining a battalion of Guards a few years ago, before the adjutant of that *corps d'élite* passed the tunic as satisfactory. Every crease and wrinkle had to be obliterated, at such cost to freedom of limbs and lungs as may be imagined. It may not be an extravagant hope that, when our army returns once more to a peace footing, the full dress may be designed with more regard to health and comfort than hitherto. Our eyes have grown accustomed during the present war to seeing soldiers in a costume, far from beautiful, indeed, but easy and respectable. There is no reason why a scarlet coat should be less comfortable than a dust-coloured one, and it will be a sad thing if the historic red of the English infantry is not preserved for full dress. But even if it were not, the khaki uniform might be rendered very becoming by the addition of a little modest ornament, especially by the restoration of the old regimental facings. These would not make troops one whit more conspicuous in the field; on the contrary, it is a commonplace of optics that parti-coloured objects are less easily detected in a landscape than those of one uniform colour.

One desirable result of making uniform more comfortable wear might be expected to follow; officers might not be so scrupulous to exchange it for mufti the moment they are released from duty. Alone among the nationalities of Europe has the British officer hitherto treated his uniform as if it were something to be ashamed of in private life. It is an unseemly, even an unhandsome practice, seeing that non-commissioned officers and privates are not allowed to disport themselves in what they call 'private clothes.' Nor was it the custom among officers in the eighteenth century, when uniform was as easy and becoming as any other dress. The usual dress of an officer, even when on leave, was then his undress uniform, just as it is now in Continental armies. The change in the British Army was the direct outcome of the Prince Regent's tyranny in buttoning up soldiers to the throat in clothes which it was a torment to wear.

It must be owned that the Duke of Wellington was in large measure responsible, inasmuch as he set the example of preferring easy clothes to uneasy ones. A plain blue frock opening at the throat to a white cravat was his invariable dress throughout his campaigns. He had for his own wear a cocked hat one third the size of the huge one prescribed for general officers. There was a famous occasion in 1814, after the restoration of Louis XVIII., when the King and the Royal Princes, with a brilliant suite, attended a state performance in the Odéon Theatre. The house was ablaze with uniforms of many nations and the gay dresses of ladies of the Court. In a box immediately opposite the royal one sat the Duke—in plain clothes! 'The pride that apes humility'? Not a bit. *Le vainqueur des vainqueurs* could scarcely be suspected of that. Simply, as he had to sit through a long performance, he chose to do so in clothes that enabled him to sit in comfort.

Much praiseworthy attention is now given to the equipment and clothing of British troops serving in hot climates, but it was otherwise throughout most of the nineteenth century, and it is incalculable how much suffering, disease, and death was caused by neglect of any such provision. When Colonel Luard was preparing his book in 1850-52 he received letters from many officers calling his attention to this matter. One of these writes:

'I shall be very glad if you dedicate a portion of your work to the dress of our soldiers in the colonies. . . . I have myself seen the Spanish, French, and Danish troops in the West Indies much

more healthy than our own, from great attention to their comfort in their dress. . . . The whole body of civilians in the tropics appear in loose white jackets and trousers and a skull-cap. . . . the shakoes and red coats of our troops were not altered in our West India colonies.'

A cavalry officer remarks: 'I hope you will dwell on the madness of our soldiers wearing leather caps under a tropical sun'; while another observes that 'a brass helmet was not found serviceable in Africa by the 7th Dragoon Guards when that regiment was at the Cape.'

Our troops suffered horribly during the first Kaffir war, 1846-48, from being clothed exactly as they had been at home—leather stocks, tight coatees, heavy shakoes, and all the rest of it. Some consideration was shown for the soldier in the second Kaffir war, 1851-52. Captain King, of the 74th Highlanders, describes how his regiment landed at Cape Town (after a voyage from England of two months!) wearing their ordinary clothing, and it was not until they had marched far into the interior that 'our bonnets and plaids were replaced by a costume more suitable for the bush—viz., a short dark canvas blouse; in addition to which feldt-schoen and lighter pouches, made of untanned leather, were issued to the men, and broad leather peaks affixed to their forage-caps.'¹

Captain King's narrative is illustrated by lithographs from his own excellent drawings, which show his men, heavily accoutred with pack and pouch, and with no protection against the sun except the aforesaid peak to the forage-cap, severely handicapped in fighting nearly naked blacks armed with rifles. No wonder the 74th lost heavily, their commander, Colonel Fordyce, falling at their head in a bush fight, together with some of his best officers.

It is not only in matters of dress and equipment that we have learnt consideration for our troops on foreign service. The splendid organisation of the Royal Army Medical Corps has been severely tested in coping with the requirements of such a force as it was never contemplated Great Britain would or could put in the field; but the test has been nobly met; the latest discoveries in science have been employed to avert disease and mortality from wounds, thereby saving soldiers and their families and friends from an incalculable amount of misery. The Transport Service has not only met the extraordinary demand upon its resources in the convey-

¹ *Campaigning in Kaffirland*, by Capt. W. R. King, 1853, p. 27.

ance of necessary supplies—food, munitions, &c.—but has proved equal to the punctual deliverance of the vast stores of comforts and even luxuries consigned from voluntary sources at home.

Among the said luxuries is one whereon the Iron Duke would have turned no favouring eye. The tobacco which has been supplied to our troops at the front—aye, and in hospital at home—must amount to a prodigious figure. When the Duke was Commander-in-Chief in 1845 he issued the following counterblast:

‘ G.O. No. 577.—The Commander-in-Chief has been informed that the practice of smoking, by the use of pipes, cigars and cheroots, has become prevalent among the Officers of the Army, which is not only in itself a species of intoxication occasioned by the fumes of tobacco, but, undoubtedly, occasions drinking and tipping by those who acquire the habit; and he intreats the Officers commanding Regiments to prevent smoking in the Mess Rooms of their several Regiments, and in the adjoining apartments, and to discourage the practice among the Officers of Junior Rank in their Regiments.’

There was no Press Censor in those days, and *Punch*, which was then a vigorous stripling in its fourth year, was allowed to make merry over this fulmination, declaring that officers of the Army were greatly perturbed, ‘dreading the possibility of being thrown upon their conversational resources, which must have a most dreary effect.’ Tobacconists drove a brisk trade in pipe-stoppers carved in the likeness of the Duke’s head. These might now be a fitting object of pursuit on the part of collectors.

THE NEW UBIQUE: SPIT AND POLISH.

BY JEFFERY E. JEFFERY.

'PERSONALLY myself,' said the Child, tilting back his chair until his head touched the wall behind him, and stretching out a lazy arm towards the cigarette-box—'personally myself, I've enjoyed this trip no end—haven't you?'

'I have,' I answered; 'so much so, Child, that the thought of going back to gun-pits and trenches and O.P.s again fills me with gloom.'

It was our last night in a most comfortable billet near—, where, on and off, we had spent rather more than a month of ease: on the morrow we were going into the line again. The trip to which the Child was referring, however, was an eight days' course at a place vaguely known as 'the —th Army Mobile Artillery Training School,' from which our battery had but lately returned.

The circumstances were these. When, five weeks ago, the division moved (for the *n*th time!) to a different part of the line, it transpired that three batteries would be 'out at rest,' as there would be no room for them in action. It also so chanced that it was our colonel's turn to be left without a 'group'¹ to command. This being so, he suggested to higher authorities that the three batteries 'out' should be those of his own brigade, in order that he might have a chance 'to tidy them up a bit,' as he phrased it. Thus it was that we found ourselves, as I have said, in extremely comfortable billets—places, I mean, where they have sheets on the beds and china jugs and gas and drains—with every prospect of a pleasant loaf. But in this we were somewhat sanguine.

The colonel's idea in having us 'out' for a while was not so much to rest us as to give us a variation of work. Being essentially a thorough man, he started—or rather ordered me to start—at the very beginning. The gunners paraded daily for marching drill, physical exercises, and 'elementary standing gun drill by numbers.' N.C.O.s and drivers were taken out and given hours of riding drill under the supervision of subalterns bursting with knowledge crammed up from the book the night before and under the personal direction of a brazen-voiced sergeant who, having passed through the

¹ A certain number of batteries.

'riding troop' at Woolwich in his youth, knew his business. The strangest sight of all was the class of signallers—men who had spent months in the foetid atmosphere of cellars and dug-outs, or creeping along telephone wires in 'unhealthy' spots—now waving flags at a word of command and going solemnly through the Morse alphabet letter by letter. Of the whole community, this was perhaps the most scandalised portion. But in a few days, when everybody (not excluding myself and the other officers) had discovered how much had been forgotten during our long spell in action, a great spirit of emulation began to be displayed. Subsections vied with one another to produce the smartest gun detachment, the sleekest horses, the best turned-out ride, the cleanest harness, guns, and wagons.

The colonel, after the manner of his kind, came at the end of a week or so to inspect things. He is not the sort of man upon whom one can easily impose. A dozen of the shiniest saddles or bits in the battery placed so as to catch the light (and the eye) near the doorway of the harness-room do not necessarily satisfy him: nor is he content with the mere general and symmetrical effect of rows of superficially clean breast-collars, traces, and breechings. On the contrary, he is quite prepared to spend an hour or more over his inspection, examining every set of harness in minute detail, even down to the backs of the buckle tongues, the inside of the double-folded breast collars, and the oft-neglected underside of saddle flaps. It is the same thing with the guns and wagons. Burnished breech-rings and polished brasswork look very nice, and he approves of them, but he does not on that account omit to look closely at every oil-hole or to check the lists of 'small stores' and 'spare parts.'

For the next week or so we were kept very busy on 'the many small points which required attention,' to quote the colonel's phrase. Nevertheless, as a variation from the monotony of siege warfare, the time was regarded by most of us as a holiday. Many things combined to enhance our pleasure. The sun shone and the country became gorgeously green again; the horses began to get their summer coats and to lose their unkempt winter's appearance; there was a fair-sized town near at hand, and passes to visit it were freely granted to N.C.O.s and men; at the back of the officers' billet was a garden with real flower-beds in it and a bit of lawn on which one could have tea. Occasionally we could hear the distant muttering of the guns, and at night we could see the 'flares' darting

up from the black horizon—just to remind us, I suppose, that the war was only in the next parish. . . .

But it was not to be supposed that a man of such energy as our colonel would be content just to ride round daily and watch three of his batteries doing rides and gun drill. It occurred to him at once that this was the time to practise the legitimate business—that is, open, moving warfare. Wherefore he made representations to various quite superior authorities. In three days, by dint of considerable personal exertion, he had secured the following concessions: two large tracts of ground suitable for driving drill and battery manœuvre, good billets, an area of some six square miles (part of the —th Army Training area) for the purpose of tactical schemes, the appointment of himself as commandant of the 'school,' a Ford ambulance for his private use, three motor lorries for the supply of the units under training, and a magnificent château for his own headquarters. And all this he accomplished without causing any serious friction between the various 'offices' and departments concerned—no mean feat.

Each course was to last eight days, and there were to be four batteries, taken from different divisions, undergoing it simultaneously. It fell to us to go with the second batch, and we spent a strenuous week of preparation: it was four months since we had done any work 'in the open,' and we knew, inwardly, that we were distinctly rusty. We packed up, and at full war strength, transport, spare horses and all, we marched our sixteen miles to the selected area. At the half-way halt we met the commander of a battery of our own brigade returning. He stopped to pass the time of day and volunteered the information that he was going on leave that night. 'And, by Jove!' he added significantly, 'I deserve a bit of rest. Réveillé at 4 A.M. every morning, out all day wet or fine, gun drill at every odd moment, schemes, tactical exercises, everybody at high pressure all the time. The colonel's fairly in his element, revels in it, and "strafes" everybody indiscriminately. But it's done us all a world of good though. Cheerio! wish you luck.' And he rode on, leaving us rather flabbergasted.

We discovered quite early (on the following morning about dawn, to be precise) that there had been no exaggeration. We began with elementary driving drill, and we did four and a half hours of it straight on end, except for occasional ten-minute halts to rest the astonished teams. It was wonderful how much we had forgotten and yet how much came back to us after the first hour or so.

'I want all your officers to drill the battery in turn,' said the colonel. 'I shall just ride round and correct mistakes.'

He did—with an energy, a power of observation, and a command of language which I have seldom seen or heard surpassed. But the ultimate result by mid-day, when all the officers and N.C.O.s were hoarse, the teams sweating and the carriages caked in oily dust—the ultimate result was, as the Child politely says, 'not too stinkin' awful.' And it had been good to hear once again the rattle and bump of the guns and wagons over hard ground, the jingle of harness and the thud of many hoofs; good to see the teams swing round together as they wheeled into line or column at a spanking trot; good above all to remember that *this* was our job and that the months spent in concrete gun-pits and double-bricked O.P.s were but a lengthy prelude to our resumption of it—some day.

In the evening, when the day's work was over and 'stables' finished, we left the tired horses picking over the remains of their hay and walked down the *pavé* village street, Angelo and I, to look at the church. Angelo is my eldest but not, as it so happens, my senior subaltern. Before the war he was a budding architect, with a taste for painting: hence the nickname, coined by the Child in one of his more erudite moods.

The church at L—— is very fine. Its square tower is thirteenth century, its interior is pure Gothic, and its vaulted roof a marvel. For its size the building is well-nigh perfect. We spent some time examining the nave and chancel—Angelo, his professional as well as his artistic enthusiasm aroused, explaining technicalities to me and making me envious of his knowledge. It was with regret that we turned away at last, for in spite of the tattered colours of some French regiment which hung on the north side of the chancel, we had forgotten the war in the quiet peacefulness of that exquisite interior. But we were quickly reminded. At the end of the church, kneeling on one of the rough chairs, was an old peasant woman: her head was bowed, and the beads dropped slowly through her twisted fingers. As we crept down the aisle she raised her eyes—not to look at us, for I think she was unconscious of our presence—but to gaze earnestly at the altar. Her lips moved in prayer, but no tear damped her yellow cheek. And, passing out into the sunlight again, I wondered for whom she was praying—husband, brother, sons?—whether, still hoping, she prayed for the living, or, faithfully, for the souls of those lost to her. They are brave, the peasant women of France. . . .

Madame our hostess, besides being one of the fattest, was also one of the most agreeable ladies it has ever been our lot to be billeted upon. Before we had been in her house ten minutes she had given us (at an amazing speed) the following information :

Her only remaining son had been wounded and was now a prisoner in Germany.

She had played hostess continuously since August 1914 to every kind of soldier, including French motor-bus drivers, Indian chiefs (*sic*), and generals.

English officers arriving after the battle of Loos slept in her hall for twenty-four hours, woke to have a bath and to eat an omelette, and then slept the clock round again.

She remembered 1870, in which war her husband had fought.

The Boches were barbarians, but they would never advance now, though at one time they had been within a few kilometres of her house.

The lettuce and cabbages in her garden were at our disposal.

She took an enormous interest in the Infant, who is even younger than the Child and is our latest acquisition.

'Regardez donc le petit, comme il est fatigué !' she exclaimed to me in the tones of an anxious mother—and then added in an excited whisper, 'A-t-il vu les Boches, ce petit sous-lieutenant ?'

When I assured her not only that he had seen them, but had fired his guns at them, she was delighted and declared that he could not be more than sixteen. But here the Infant, considering that the conversation was becoming personal, intervened, and the old lady left us to our dinner.

Towards the end of our week we packed up essentials and marched out to bivouac two nights and fight a two days' running battle—directed, of course, by our indefatigable colonel. After the dead flat ugliness where we had been in action all the winter and early spring it was a delight to find ourselves in this spacious undulating country, with its trees and church spires and red-tiled villages. We fought all day against an imaginary foe, made innumerable mistakes, all forcibly pointed out by the colonel (who rode both his horses to a standstill in endeavouring to direct operations and at the same time watch the procedure of four widely separated batteries); our imaginary infantry captured ridge after ridge, and we advanced from position to position 'in close support,' until finally, the rout of the foe being complete, we moved to our appointed bivouacs.

In peace time it would have been regarded as a quite ordinary day, boring because of its resemblance to so many others. Now it was different. True, it was make-believe from start to finish, without even blank cartridge to give the vaguest hint of reality. But there was this : at the back of all our minds was the knowledge that this was a preparation—possibly our last preparation—not for something in the indefinite future (as in peace time), but for an occasion that assuredly *is* coming, perhaps in a few months, perhaps even in a few weeks. The colonel spoke truly when, at his first conference, he said :

‘During these schemes you must all of you force yourselves to imagine that there is a real enemy opposed to you. The Boche is no fool : he’s got guns, and he knows how to use them. If you show up on crest lines with a whole battery staff at your heels, he’ll have the place “registered,” and he’ll smash your show to bits before you ever get your guns into action at all. *Think* where he is likely to be, *think* what he’s likely to be doing, don’t expose yourselves unless you must, and above all, *get a move on.*’

It was a delightful bivouac. We were on the sheltered side of a little hill, looking south into a wooded valley. Nightingales sang to us as we lay smoking on our valises after a picnic dinner and stared dreamily at the stars above us.

‘Jolly, isn’t it ?’ said the Child, ‘but I s’pose we wouldn’t be feeling quite so comfy if it was the real business.’

‘Don’t,’ said Angelo quietly. ‘I was pretending to myself that we were just a merry camping party, here for pleasure only. I’d forgotten the war.’

But I had not. I was thinking of the last time I had bivouacked—amongst the corn sheaves of a harvest that was never gathered, side by side with friends who were soon to fall, on the night before the first day of Mons, nearly two years ago.

The following day was more or less a repetition of the first, except that we made fewer mistakes and ‘dropped into action’ with more style and finish. We were now becoming fully aware of the almost-forgotten fact that a field battery is designed to be a mobile unit, and we were just beginning to take shape as such when our time was over. A day’s rest for the horses and then we returned to our comfortable rest billets. It had been a strenuous week, but I think everyone had thoroughly enjoyed it. . . .

We have had two days in which to ‘clean up,’ and now to-morrow we are to relieve another battery and take our place in

the line again. Our holiday is definitely over. It will take a little time to settle down to the old conditions : our week's practice of open warfare has spoilt us for this other kind. We who have climbed hills and looked over miles of rolling country will find an increased ugliness in our old flat surroundings. It will seem ludicrous to put our guns into pits again—the guns that we have seen bounding over rough ground behind the straining teams. To be cooped up in a brick O.P. staring at a strip of desolation will be odious after our bivouacs under the stars and our dashes into action under a blazing sun. Worst of all, perhaps, is the thought that the battery will be split up again into 'gun line' and 'wagon line,' with three miles or more separating its two halves, instead of its being, as it has been all these weeks, one complete cohesive unit. But what must be, must be ; and it is absurd to grumble. Moreover—the end is not yet.

'Let's toss up for who takes first turn at the O.P. when the relief is completed,' suggested the Child.

'Wait a minute,' I said, remembering something suddenly. 'Do you know what to-day is ?'

'Friday,' he volunteered, 'and to-morrow ought to be a half-holiday, but it won't be, 'cos we're going into action.'

I passed the port round again. 'It's only a fortnight since we celebrated the battery's first birthday,' I said, 'but to-day the Royal Regiment of Artillery is two hundred years old. Let's drink its health.'

And we did.

THE REHABILITATION OF PRIVATE HAGAN.

BY 'MAJOR, R.A.M.C.'

PRIVATE TIMOTHY HAGAN, of 'D' Company, extracted a box of matches from his pocket, mechanically lighted a seasoned briar pipe, and sought inspiration from the log roof of the dugout.

The last of the enemy's usual evening salvo of shells screamed above the tree-tops and burst harmlessly in a stubble field. Hagan did not move. The announcement that the evening meal was ready equally failed to interest him.

The dugout, efficiently constructed of sand-bags, logs, and earth, was just large enough for the accommodation of two improvised beds and blankets. Private Sawyer, the normal occupant of the other half, was at the moment busy in the kitchen outside beneath the trees. It was seclusion that Hagan courted, not protection.

Presently, Sawyer, his face smoke-begrimed and heated, thrust his head over a sand-bag parapet.

'Tea ready, cocky,' he cried.

'Phwat's the good ov thay?' grunted Hagan, dropping his pipe listlessly. 'Fed up!'

Sawyer's eyes dilated in speechless surprise. His rapid scrutiny of his pal's downcast features failed to help.

'Ullo, what's wrong, hey?' he asked, wiping his face with the back of his hand and dropping into the trench. 'Can't yer high-class stomach relish bully-beef no more? What's wrong with it?'

Without answering in words Timothy slipped his hand into the breast pocket of his tunic, produced a much-thumbed envelope, and slowly unfolded a letter. The sight of the irregular writing seemed to have an immediate tonic effect upon his demeanour. His eyes suddenly became suffused with red-blood anger. (He had learned the habit in more than one barbed-wire scrimmage against the enemy.) Clenching his fists, he cursed beneath his breath, thoughtfully, with intent.

'H'm!' grunted Sawyer sympathetically.

'There's a blighter at home,' stammered Hagan, 'phwat is afeared to do his bit out here'—he hesitated as if to swallow pent-up gorge—'of the name of O'Shea—a damned thaivin' grocer.

The letter says as how he's afther walking out wid Kitty Murphy, as is promised to mesilf.'

'Ugh, a woman is it?' breathed Sawyer.

'And me not able to get me hands on him,' groaned Hagan. 'Tis perishin' hard.'

The sharp explosions of anti-aircraft shells in rapid succession overhead caused Sawyer to glance upwards. Shading his eyes with his hand, he shook his head in disappointment at the marksmanship displayed, and slipped back again into a sitting posture.

'What abhart leave 'ome?' he inquired. 'The captain says as 'ow each of us is to 'ave a turn—in doo course.'

'Bah!' ejaculated Hagan contemptuously. 'We all knows phwat in doo course mains.' Meditatively refolding his letter, he consigned it again to its inner pocket. 'There ain't no proper foighting now naither—nothin' but scrappin' phwat doesn't even kape the blood wharm in yez veins.' Striking a match on the heel of his boot, he stared into space and forgot to use it. 'I be afther thinkin', Jock, it is now that I could be sphared, or not at all.'

'Wot's wimmin to you now, anyway? 'Tis different with the married blokes,' murmured Sawyer. 'Won't we both be killed in doo course?'

'We will that,' agreed Hagan. 'But, all the same, I could not lie happy loike widout I be afther settlin' first wid the grocer.'

For some seconds Sawyer did not speak. In the cool calm of the autumn evening there arose before him the memory of a dozen little wayside cemeteries marked by stereotyped plain wooden crosses—the British soldier's humble badge of honour won. With a whimsical smile upon his lips he wondered vaguely where his own resting-place would lie.

'Ye see, Jock,' persisted Hagan, 'tisn't as if I was much wanted here just now.'

Sawyer, turning suddenly, stared hard at his friend's bronzed countenance, noted the stern-set jaw, and ceased sucking his pipe. He had learned to read Tim Hagan's moods with the accuracy of much practice in the course of many devious wanderings.

'Humph! Wot's the bloomin' plan of campaign?' he demanded. 'Sneakin' be'ind mud'eaps, or fightin' in the open?'

Hagan mechanically refilled his pipe and rammed down the tobacco with mature deliberation. An indefinite hum of voices near the company cooking-pots and the sharp bark of a French 75-gun in the near distance accentuated the seclusion of the dug-

out. A dull crimson glow of sunset irradiated a cloudless skyline. To the rear of the wood the lowing of a cow sounded strangely out of place. On the left, cutting the winding line of trenches, lay the long, straight, deserted, *pavé* road leading to the German lines. The scene, through many days of comparative stagnation, had grown contemptuously familiar.

'I'm sick,' said Hagan, 'to-morrow morning as iver is.'

Sawyer, gurgling in a characteristic manner meant to denote mirth, shook his head.

'Sick is it?' he commented. 'Wot's the complaint, matey? Some 'as fits; others injures their trigger fingers; some 'as lost their glasses and can't see nothink; some breaks their false teeth and gets shockin' pains from the hard biscuits; some 'as pains in the kidneys; some 'as a narsty corph. 'Tain't the season for corphs.' Rubbing his nose with the back of a begrimed finger, he relapsed into thought. 'Some 'as a buzzin' in the 'ead wot nothink can cure. Some '—looking serious, he suddenly ended in a grunt—' 'Tain't good enough, Tim, me'lad, even for the pleasure of punchin' the 'ead of a stinkin' grocer. 'You see, if you only get a few days in 'orspital, back you come again. If you're took serious, 'ome you goes and stays there for a long time and misses everythink 'ere.' Gripping Hagan's arm with highly strung fingers, he leaned nearer. 'You ain't goin' to schrimshank at 'ome if a big push comes, old pal, are you?'

Hagan's jaw clenched and his lips moved speechlessly. Then once more he drew the letter from his pocket and handed it to his friend.

'Read that!' he said. 'I'm goin' home.'

Sawyer's face assumed a sphinx-like gravity. He knew the proverbial strength of obstinacy, also the amount of that commodity possessed by Tim Hagan. He smoothed out the paper and sniffed violently. A faint perfume of cheap scent permeated the immediate atmosphere. With a grunt, he proceeded to master the contents of the epistle. So slowly did he progress, however, that presently even Hagan began to show signs of impatience. Sawyer was, in truth, merely gaining time for thought.

'If you're caught out malingerin' on active service, Tim,' he whispered at length, 'it won't be only seven days "confined to barracks" you will be gettin' off with.'

With eyes bent upon the crimson skyline, Hagan sighed wearily.

'Tis goin' home I be, Jock,' he repeated. 'I'll be afther

marryin' Kitty Murphy, and thin me sickness will all go and back it is I'll come.'

With a groan of despair Sawyer crawled to his feet and, without another word, walked off in the direction of a ruined château. He knew there was no immediate urgency. For ordinary cases of illness the ambulance wagon would not arrive until the morning. He, therefore, still had all night in which to formulate a plan of operations. It was, of course, open to him to drop a hint to the R.A.M.C. orderly, but that would have to be a *dernier ressort* indeed.

Left to himself, Hagan brooded more sombrely than before. The regulations regarding reporting sick were perfectly familiar to him. For a serious case the medical officer could be summoned within a few minutes. The Field Ambulance advanced dressing-station, located in a school-house in the nearest village, was not more than a mile away. Weighing the matter in all its visible points, he suddenly decided that the rôle of an emergency case would better fit his purpose than that of the ordinary sick soldier reporting at the sealed-pattern hour.

To determine was to act. Smearing the perspiration of undue thought from his forehead, he buttoned his tunic, looked hastily about the interstices of the sand-bags of the dugout for small valued possessions, and slipped out beneath the shelter of the trees.

The area lying between the wood and the village where the Field Ambulance had located its post was alive with troops. The *pavé* of the road, upheaved by continuous traffic and an occasional shell, was not a healthy place for evening exercise, but there was no order against it. The danger of being shot during the journey had long become a negligible quantity. A church tower, shell-riddled and tottering, was the landmark. Behind it Hagan knew he should find the red-cross flag hanging limply from its pole.

Women, with a horse and cart gathering the wheat in a field on his left, glanced up with pleasant smile of greeting as he passed. The orderlies filling a regimental water-cart at the village pump took no notice of him whatever. Presently, reaching the shadows of the church, he began to walk slower, then halted. He felt as if he needed a moment in which to pull himself together. So far in his life his histrionic sense had never been tested. It is notorious that even experienced actors occasionally suffer from stage fright.

A couple of R.A.M.C. orderlies, leaning against the door-post beneath the red-cross flag, presently noticed a soldier staggering

towards them and blindly clutching at the empty air. In normal times their unanimous diagnosis would have been 'beer.' They knew, however, that in the firing line such could not be.

Hagan, squinting between half-closed eyelashes, staggered another ten yards, embraced one of the orderlies round the neck, slid limply to the ground, and, breathing heavily, lay quite still.

In a moment a stretcher was at hand; within a minute the patient was inside the building. There were only half a dozen other men to share it with him, as the evening evacuation of sick and wounded to the Clearing Hospital had already taken place.

'What's wrong, matey?' questioned one of the orderlies, holding a pannikin of soup to the patient's lips. 'Here, drink this. Wake up! Can you hear me?'

With a shudder Hagan opened his eyes, and, half-rising to his feet, glared about him. Rolls of wool and bandages, trays of surgical instruments, splints, buckets, and basins surrounded him upon all sides.

'Ah—the hospital!' he muttered. 'I remimber now. It is afther faintin' I be.'

'H'm—lie down!' advised the orderly, pushing him back on the stretcher. 'I will call the medical officer. Perhaps he'll give you a tot of brandy.'

'Begob, and I'm all roight, me bhoi,' asserted Hagan, with well-assumed eagerness to depart. 'Give me only foive—or maybe tin—minutes' rest and a sip av whater.'

The orderly gave the water, but, none the less, called his officer. Meanwhile Hagan, with shut eyes, summoned to his aid all medical knowledge, real and spurious, that had ever crossed his path of life. The rôle he had assigned to himself was extremely difficult. Whatever else might be imaginary, the beads of perspiration bedewing his forehead were certainly genuine enough. In order to fool a man successfully one requires to know something of his mental attitude towards the subject in hand. What a medico's mind might contain, or what pitfalls it was necessary to beware of in dealing with him, were points that suddenly assailed the wretched Tim with terrifying force. In fact, had the R.A.M.C. officer not arrived within a few moments, it is probable that fear of superior wisdom would have driven the schemer forth from the building.

'Well, my man, what is the matter?' asked the officer, feeling his patient's pulse. 'Fainted, hey?'

'Yes, sir,' asserted the orderly. 'Fell into my arms.'

Hagan, opening his eyes slowly, shook his head from side to side, noisily blew out his cheeks, and 'marked time.' Adjusting a stethoscope, the officer examined his chest, grunted, and ordered his temperature to be taken. That the result would be negative Hagan knew only too well. Consequently, it seemed obvious that it behoved him to make the next move.

'Terrible buzzin' in me head, sor,' he breathed.

'Ah—quite so. Rest and light diet. Overstrain. Perhaps you will be all right again by morning.'

Emboldened by an initiatory success, Hagan ventured upon driving the nail still deeper.

'Lost all feelin's in me legs, sor,' he added, with a groan. 'It—er—has been comin' on, sor, for a week; but it wasn't loikin' to go sick I was.'

The medico, with newly awakened interest, bent his eyes upon the man's face and silently observed the movements of his rolling head and eyes. Hagan, gradually ceasing his gyrations, at length opened his eyes and met the doctor's absorbed gaze. It was at that moment—had he but known it—that he sorely needed all the knowledge available regarding his interrogator. The latter was by nature a silent man, but that did not interfere with his power of absorbing details and piecing them together with uncanny accuracy.

'A pin, sir?' suggested the orderly.

'What for?' asked the officer blandly.

'Thought, perhaps, you wanted to test his feelings, sir,' explained the zealot.

'No—er—that is, not to-night,' answered the officer, suppressing a half-smile beneath his moustache. 'We will see what a night's rest can do.'

As he watched the tall figure of the doctor sauntering out of the room, Hagan experienced a sensation of acute alarm. In the presence of the calm assurance of this man of few words he felt that he had slipped up somewhere. But where? Loss of all feeling in the legs was surely a good effort! Glancing at the orderly, he noticed the man smiling in a peculiar manner as his officer disappeared from sight. An orderly's knowledge has its limitations, even if a doctor's has not. The more thought he gave to it the more suspicious did he feel, and a guilty conscience did not assist matters.

Soup and biscuits were served out for supper. Tim Hagan could have absorbed both with relish. He felt, however, that such

diet might not be good for buzzing in the head—and said so. The night orderly, indifferent to arguments, deposited the food on a box by his side and departed. The fact, however, that all the articles of diet had disappeared by morning was by no means lost upon the day orderly when he returned to duty at the hour of breakfast.

During the silent watches of the night Hagan had time to think of many things. He decided that he did not like the look of the medical officer, nor, indeed, did he know what to make of the orderly. Could he have fought them hand to hand, he would have known exactly where he was. In this subtle, silent contest of brains he was beginning to writhe against an invisible foe which seemed to be closing in upon him more surely with every tick of his watch. A change of diagnosis seemed advisable. But, with his scanty repertoire of diseases, the point was none too easy. In fact, when the officer unexpectedly stood by his side, he was still so undecided, that closed eyes and immobility seemed the path of least resistance.

'Well, Private Hagan, how are you this morning?' inquired the officer, shaking him by the shoulder.

What the answer to the question was Timothy did not know. He conceded a point, however, by opening his eyes.

The question being repeated with emphasis, an inspiration gripped him. In a flash his line of country seemed to open out before him. The dizziness in the head had led to complications.

'Carn't hear,' he blurted.

'Ah!' commented the persecutor, raising his eyebrows. 'Deaf, are you? That's bad.' Perceptibly dropping his voice, he studied his victim's face. 'H'm—I wonder what degree of deafness. Which is the worst ear?'

With praiseworthy presence of mind, Hagan resisted the impulse to answer. Staring blankly at the ceiling, he made no sign.

Stepping a pace nearer, the officer spoke louder. Hagan still made no voluntary response, but the perspiration upon his face attested to the physical effort.

From the psychological standpoint the doctor was intensely amused. That Private Timothy Hagan was a clumsy malingerer, pure and simple, he had no doubt. To prove such a negative condition however is quite another matter. If proved, the offence meant a court-martial. As an officer it was his duty to conceal no crime which could be proved. He was interested, but had little time just then for fancy cases. Hagan's facial expression of

struggling conjecture condemned him, morally, beyond a doubt, but the production of the self-same expression before the members of a court-martial could hardly be guaranteed.

It was a six-inch German shell that solved the situation for the moment. Dropping three hundred yards from the dressing-station in the middle of the village street it exploded with a roar which smashed every pane of glass in the building. A second quickly followed. The R.A.M.C. staff, expectant of they knew not what, stood listening. Hagan, feeling the eyes of the medical officer upon him, did not move a muscle.

'One to you,' murmured the officer to himself. 'I don't believe a word of it all the same.' Turning on his heel, he winked to the orderly and with well-assumed indifference strode to the far end of the room.

The orderly, quickly stepping round to the head of Hagan's stretcher, needed no further instructions. With book and pencil in hand, he appeared to be engaged upon his ordinary duty of taking names for the Clearing Hospital.

'What's your number, matey?' he asked quickly.

The wretched competitor, breathing heavily after his recent mental tension, had dropped his guard.

'4179,' he answered promptly.

'*Thank you!*' remarked a bland voice from the doorway.

To state that Hagan could have kicked himself for his stupidity, is to put the case mildly. Conscious that no words of his could possibly regain lost ground, he stared blankly at the accusing face of the officer.

'It's all UP, matey,' whispered the orderly, indulging in an open guffaw.

'Thin I may as well be afther gettin' on me bhoots,' remarked the culprit quietly, rising to his feet. 'You've bin done down, Tim, me bhoy, and there ain't no manner av use in kickin'.'

What happened next in that little school-house, as regards points of detail, has never been actually recorded. That a deafening explosion resembling the noise of the end of all things earthly, accompanied by the caving in of the brickwork of the side of the room, and followed by the collapse of most of the roof, took place at that moment are facts of history.

'It has come at last,' groaned the doctor. 'Thank God, there are only a few men in the building.'

A second later, a tottering rafter, swaying beneath its weight of tiles, fell with a sickening crash and buried him beneath its ruins.

In an instant all had become chaos.

Whatever the damage done, it was probably at an end. Hagan appreciated that much immediately. That he himself remained unhurt was a miracle. The orderly, holding both hands to his head, lay like a log on the floor. Several stretchers, with their occupants, lay buried beneath the débris of brick and plaster.

'A fifteen-inch, begob!' exclaimed Hagan, seizing the orderly by the shoulders and dragging him into the open air.

The atmosphere outside was still reeking with heavy black smoke and dust. A cavern in the road, large enough to conceal a motor-bus, yawned in his path. The heat of action was upon him. Handing over the orderly to other hands, he did not hesitate. There were wounded men to be rescued. At any moment a second shell might follow the first, or more walls might fall. A feeble, muffled call for help, emanating from the very centre of the wreckage, arrested his attention. He knew that bland, cool voice only too well. The available orderlies were already struggling to remove the wounded and unearth their officer.

Hagan dashed forward. He was a strong man, and in the best of condition. Without argument, he took command.

To remove the smaller masses of mortared brick was the work of but a few moments. The men worked at fever heat. The cries from beneath grew feebler, almost ceased. It was the weight of long rafters which formed the main obstruction. Without axes or saws, its removal might be a matter of hours.

Wiping the sweat from his face, Hagan set his teeth and urged on his party to final effort. But their combined strength was without avail to clear the rafters. The victim beneath seemed nearing suffocation with every breath he drew.

Hagan could see only one way, and he took it.

Throwing himself on his face, he insinuated his head beneath the rafters, and by herculean efforts forced his shoulders to follow. Tearing away the loose stuff with his hands, whilst the orderlies endeavoured to ease the weight above him, he at length was able to gauge the situation accurately. A great beam lay across the chest of the officer, whose body supported it.

Tim Hagan sweated in an agony as he looked. He had seen hundreds of men killed in action, but to see his late persecutor being slowly crushed to death before his eyes was more than he could bear.

From outside the cries of men with axes reached him. Immediate action, however, was what was wanted. An instant's

thought, a whispered, guttural prayer, and he proceeded with his task.

Rolling with difficulty upon his back, he wriggled himself, inch by inch, close up beside his now silent antagonist, and with all the strength in his body pressed upwards until he managed to relieve the pressure on the other's chest. Inch by inch he shoved the unconscious man aside and replaced the latter's body by his own. Then, with ears at acutest tension, he listened to the crash of the axes and wondered how long he could last—how long it would take him to die.

* * * * *

Two weeks later, Private Timothy Hagan, propped up in bed, lay in a hospital at the base. Presently an R.A.M.C. officer, obviously also more or less convalescent, entered the ward by means of a wheeled chair and looked about him. Hagan, catching the visitor's eye, flushed deeply, laboriously drew a long breath, and turned away his head. The next minute, the officer, having given an order to the orderly pushing his chair, was at Hagan's side. A word to the orderly, and the two wounded men were alone.

'I have come, Hagan, to thank you for my life,' said the officer.

Hagan nervously rubbed his forehead with his hand, moved his lips as if framing unspoken words, and drew a deep inspiration.

'Twasn't cowardice, sor,' he breathed at last. 'Twas nought but a little gurl at home phwat drew me.'

'Cowardice! You! You're one of the pluckiest men I have ever seen. What do you mean?'

'I main, sor, whin I was schrimshankin'.'

'Sh—sh, my man! That little matter is all forgotten.'

'Yez did have me beat, sor,' persisted Hagan, with a flash of humour in his eyes. 'Twas too cliver for me you was, sor. 'Twas the orderly hit me below the belt. He took me unbeknownst, sor.'

With a light laugh, the medical officer placed his hand upon the brawny fist of the man beside him.

'You will get home to see your girl after all, Hagan—in your own way—and I am glad,' he said.

'Is it to be quits then, sor?'

'Yes—we will call it that,' agreed the officer. 'For the time being, we are quits. Later, I will repay you what is over—if I ever can.'

DURING MUSIC: FANTASY AND FUGUE.

BY J. B. TREND.

I.

THAT low-breathed air and inwoven melody,
 Twined marvellously together, swift to run
 To the farthest bound of song, or knit in one
 To melt and glow in o'erwhelming harmony,
 You played. And I, startled to fantasy,
 Beheld a land of dishevelled wood and stream,
 A desperate rally of men, a flash, a scream—
 And a friend riven beyond all agony.

Yet did you play. Each delicate, rival thread
 Of sound was knotted at last and the music ended.
 Forest, colour, and mountain, earth held none
 But stunted woods with no companion tread,
 Greyness, and little hills, in a life unfriended;
 For all joy in things and love of them were gone.

II.

I heard those echoing tones your touch unpenned,
 Now hammer-notes that rivetted life with love,
 Now light as sou'west wind blown softly above;
 But all you played only to him could tend.
 So let it be, I said, until life's end;
 In the tinkling wash at the bows, or water lapping
 All night upon the dinghy's side, or tapping
 Of light wind in the halyards; there is my friend.

So did your unrelenting notes flit by,
 While death and music in my thought were welded
 To swing me lonely down to the loveless night.
 I am a sail that wind takes wantonly
 Because the sheet has carried away that held it—
 Then let your fugue pursue its scornful flight!

*LADY CONNIE.*¹

BY MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.

CHAPTER XVII.

FALLODEN had just finished a solitary luncheon, in the little dining-room of the Boar's Hill cottage. There was a garden door in the room, and lighting a cigarette, he passed out through it to the terrace outside. A landscape lay before him, which has often been compared to that of the Val d'Arno seen from Fiesole, and has indeed some common points with that incomparable mingling of man's best with the best of mountain and river. It was the last week of October, and the autumn was still warm and windless, as though there were no shrieking November to come. Oxford, the beautiful city, with its domes and spires, lay in the hollow beneath the spectator, wreathed in thin mists of sunlit amethyst. Behind that ridge in the middle distance ran the river and the Nuneham woods; beyond rose the long blue line of the Chilterns. In front of the cottage the ground sank through copse and field to the river level, the hedge lines all held by sentinel trees, to which the advancing autumn had given that significance the indiscriminate summer green denies. The gravely rounded elms with their golden caps, the scarlet of the beeches, the pale lemon-yellow of the nearly naked limes, the splendid blacks of yew and fir—they were all there, mingled in the autumn cup of misty sunshine, like melting jewels. And among them, the enchanted city shone, fair and insubstantial, from the depth below; as it were, the spiritual word and voice of all the scene.

Fallden paced up and down the terrace, smoking and thinking. That was Otto's open window. But Radowitz had not yet appeared that morning, and the ex-scout, who acted butler and valet to the two men, had brought word that he would come down in the afternoon, but was not to be disturbed till then.

'What lunacy made me do it?' thought Fallden, standing still at the end of the terrace which fronted the view.

He and Radowitz had been three weeks together. Had he been of the slightest service or consolation to Radowitz during that time? He doubted it. That incalculable impulse which had

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made him propose himself as Otto's companion for the winter still persisted indeed. He was haunted still by a sense of being 'under command'—directed—by a force which could not be repelled. Ill at ease, unhappy, as he was, and conscious of being quite ineffective, whether as nurse or companion, unless Radowitz proposed to 'throw up,' he knew that he himself should hold on; though why, he could scarcely have explained.

But the divergences between them were great; the possibilities of friction many. Falloden was astonished to find that he disliked Otto's little fopperies and eccentricities quite as much as he had ever done in college days; his finicking dress, his foreign ways in eating, his tendency to boast about his music, his country, and his forebears, on his good days, balanced by a brooding irritability on his bad days. And he was conscious that his own ways and customs were no less teasing to Radowitz; his Tory habits of thought, his British contempt for vague sentimentalisms and heroics, for all that *panache* means to the Frenchman, or 'glory' to the Slav.

'Then why, in the name of common sense, are we living together?'

He could really give no answer but the answer of 'necessity'—of a spiritual *ἀνάγκη*—issuing from a strange tangle of circumstance. The helpless form, the upturned face of his dying father, seemed to make the centre of it, and those faint last words, so sharply, and as it were, dynamically connected with the hateful memory of Otto's fall and cry in the Marmion Quad, and the hateful ever-present fact of his maimed life. Constance too—his scene with her on the river bank—her letter breaking with him—and then the soft mysterious change in her—and that passionate involuntary promise in her eyes and voice, as they stood together in her aunts' garden—all these various elements, bitter and sweet, were mingled in the influence which was shaping his own life. He wanted to forgive himself; and he wanted Constance to forgive him, whether she married him or no. A kind of sublimated egotism, he said to himself, after all!

But Otto? What had really made him consent to take up daily life with the man to whom he owed his disaster? Falloden seemed occasionally to be on the track of an explanation, which would then vanish and evade him. He was conscious, however, that here also, Constance Bledlow was somehow concerned; and, perhaps, the Pole's mystical religion. He asked himself, indeed, as Constance had already done, whether some presentiment of

doom, together with the Christian doctrines of forgiveness and vicarious suffering, were not at the root of it? There had been certain symptoms apparent during Otto's last weeks at Penfold known only to the old vicar, to himself and Sorell. The doctors were not convinced yet of the presence of phthisis; but from various signs, Falloden was inclined to think that the boy believed himself sentenced to the same death which had carried off his mother. Was there then a kind of calculated charity in his act also—but aiming in his case at an eternal reward?

'He wants to please God—and comfort Constance—by forgiving me. I want to please her—and relieve myself, by doing something to make up to him. He has the best of it! But we are neither of us disinterested.'

The manservant came out with a cup of coffee.

'How is he?' said Falloden, as he took it, glancing up at a still curtained window.

The man hesitated.

'Well, I don't know, sir, I'm sure. He saw the doctor this morning, and told me afterwards not to disturb him till three o'clock. But he rang just now, and said I was to tell you that two ladies were coming to tea.'

'Did he mention their names?'

'Not as I'm aware of, sir.'

Falloden pondered a moment.

'Tell Mr. Radowitz, when he rings again, that I have gone down to the college ground for some football, and I shan't be back till after six. You're sure he doesn't want to see me?'

'No, sir, I think not. He told me to leave the blind down, and not to come in again till he rang.'

Falloden put on flannels, and ran down the field paths towards Oxford, and the Marmion ground, which lay on the hither side of the river. Here he took hard exercise for a couple of hours, walking on afterwards to his club in the High Street, where he kept a change of clothes. He found some old Marmion friends there, including Robertson and Meyrick, who asked him eagerly after Radowitz.

'Better come and see,' said Falloden. 'Give you a bread and cheese luncheon any day.'

They got no more out of him. But his reticence made them visibly uneasy, and they both declared their intention of coming up the following day. In both men there was a certain indefinable

change which Falloden soon perceived. Both seemed, at times, to be dragging a weight too heavy for their youth. At other times, they were just like other men of their age; but Falloden, who knew them well, realised that they were both hag-ridden by remorse for what had happened in the summer. And indeed the attitude of a large part of the college towards them, and towards Falloden, when at rare intervals he shewed himself there, could hardly have been colder or more hostile. The 'bloods' were broken up; the dons had set their faces steadily against any form of 'ragging'; and the story of the maimed hand, of the wrecking of Radowitz's career, together with sinister rumours as to his general health, had spread through Oxford, magnifying as they went. Falloden met it all with a haughty silence; and was but seldom seen in his old haunts.

And presently it had become known, to the stupefaction of those who were aware of the earlier facts, that victim and tormentor, the injured and the offender, were living together in the Boar's Hill cottage where Radowitz was finishing the composition required for his second musical examination, and Falloden—having lost his father, his money and his prospects—was reading for a prize Fellowship to be given by Merton in December.

It was already moonlight when Falloden began to climb the long hill again, which leads up from Folly Bridge to the height on which stood the cottage. But the autumn sunset was not long over, and in the mingled light, all the rich colours of the fading woodland seemed to be suspended in, or fused with, the evening air. Forms and distances, hedges, trees, moving figures, and distant buildings were marvellously though dimly glorified; and above the golds and reds and purples of the misty earth, shone broad and large—an Achilles shield in heaven—the autumn moon, with one bright star beside it.

Suddenly, out of the twilight, Falloden became aware of a pony-carriage descending the hill, and two ladies in it. His blood leapt. He recognised Constance Bledlow, and he supposed the other lady was Mrs. Mulholland.

Constance on her side knew in a moment from the bearing of his head and shoulders who was the tall man approaching them. She spoke hurriedly to Mrs. Mulholland.

'Do you mind if I stop and speak to Mr. Falloden?'

Mrs. Mulholland shrugged her shoulders—

'Do as you like, my dear. Only don't expect me to be very forthcoming!'

Constance stopped the carriage, and bent forward.

'Mr. Falloden!'

He came up to her. Connie introduced him to Mrs. Mulholland, who bowed coldly.

'We have just been to see Otto Radowitz,' said Constance. 'We found him—very sadly, to-day.' Her hesitating voice, with the note of wistful appeal in it, affected him strangely.

'Yes, it has been a bad day. I haven't seen him at all.'

'He gave us tea, and talked a great deal. He was rather excited. But he looked wretched. And why has he turned against his doctor?'

'Has he turned against his doctor?' Falloden's tone was one of surprise. 'I thought he liked him.'

'He said he was a croaker, and he wasn't going to let himself be depressed by anybody—doctor or no.'

Falloden was silent. Mrs. Mulholland interposed.

'Perhaps you would like to walk a little way with Mr. Falloden? I can manage the pony.'

Constance descended. Falloden turned back with her towards Oxford. The pony-carriage followed at some distance behind.

Then Falloden talked freely. The presence of the light figure beside him, in its dark dress and close-fitting cap, seemed to thaw the chill of life. He began rapidly to pour out his own anxieties, his own sense of failure.

'I am the last man in the world who ought to be looking after him; I know that as well as anybody,' he said, with emphasis. 'But what's to be done? Sorell can't get away from college. And Radowitz knows very few men intimately. Neither Meyrick nor Robertson would be any better than me.'

'Oh, not so good—not nearly so good!' exclaimed Constance eagerly. 'You don't know! He counts on you.'

Falloden shook his head.

'Then he counts on a broken reed. I irritate and annoy him a hundred times a day.'

'Oh, no, no—he *does* count on you,' repeated Connie in her soft, determined voice. 'If you give up, he will be much—much worse off!' Then she added after a moment—'Don't give up! I—I ask you!'

'Then I shall stay.'

They moved on a few steps in silence, till Connie said eagerly—

'Have you any news from Paris?'

'Yes, I am going over next week. We wrote in the nick of time. The whole thing was just being given up—for lack of funds. Now I have told him he may spend what he pleases, so long as he does the thing.'

'Please—mayn't I help?'

'Thank you. It's my affair.'

'It'll be very—very expensive.'

'I shall manage it.'

'It would be kinder'—her voice shook a little—'if I might help.'

He considered it—then said doubtfully—

'Suppose you provide the records?—the things it plays? I don't know anything about music—and I have been racking my brains to think of somebody in Paris who could look after that part of it.'

Constance exclaimed. Why, she had several friends in Paris, in the very thick of the musical world there! She had herself had lessons all one winter in Paris at the Conservatoire from a dear old fellow—a Pole, a pupil of Chopin in his youth, and in touch with the whole Polish colony in Paris, which was steeped in music.

'He made love to me a little'—she said laughing—'I'm sure he'd do anything for us. I'll write *at once*! And there is somebody at the Embassy—why, of course, I can set all kinds of people to work!'

And her feet began to dance along the road beside him.

'We must get some Polish music'—she went on—'There's that marvellous young pianist they rave about in Paris—Paderewski. I'm sure he'd help! Otto has often talked to me about him. We must have lots of Chopin—and Liszt—though of course he wasn't a Pole!—And Polish national songs!—Otto was only telling me to-day how Chopin loved them—how he and Liszt used to go about the villages and farms and note them down. Oh we'll have a *wonderful* collection!'

Her eyes shone in her small, flushed face. They walked on fast, talking and dreaming, till there was Folly Bridge in front of them, and the beginnings of Oxford. Falloden pulled up sharply.

'I must run back. We have supper early. Will you come again?'

She held out her hand. His face beside her, as the moonlight caught it, stirred in her a sudden, acute sense of delight.

'Oh yes—we'll come again. But don't leave him!—don't, please, think of it! He trusts you—he leans on you.'

‘It is kind of you to believe it. But I am no use!’

He put her back into the carriage, bowed formally, and was gone, running up the hill at an athlete’s pace.

The two ladies drove silently on, and were soon amongst the movement and traffic of the Oxford streets. Connie’s mind was steeped in passionate feeling. Till now Fallden had touched first her senses, then her pity. Now in these painful and despondent attempts of his to adjust himself to Otto’s weakness and irritability, he was stirring sympathies and enthusiasms in her which belonged to that deepest soul in Connie which was just becoming conscious of itself. And all the more, perhaps, because in Fallden’s manner towards her there was nothing left of the lover. For the moment at any rate she preferred it so. Life was all doubt, expectation, thrill—its colour heightened, its meanings underlined. And in her complete uncertainty as to what turn it would take, and how the doubt would end, lay the spell—the potent tormenting charm—of the situation.

She was sorry, bitterly sorry for Radowitz—the victim. But she loved Fallden—the offender! It was the perennial injustice of passion, the eternal injustice of human things.

When Fallden was half-way up the hill, he left the road, and took a short cut through fields, by a path which led him to the back of the cottage, where its sitting-room window opened on the garden and the view. As he approached the house, he saw that the sitting-room blinds had not been drawn, and some of the windows were still open. The whole room was brilliantly lit by fire and lamp. Otto was there alone, sitting at the piano, with his back to the approaching spectator and the moonlit night outside. He was playing something with his left hand; Fallden could see him plainly. Suddenly, he saw the boy’s figure collapse. He was still sitting, but his face was buried in his arms which were lying on the piano; and through the open window, Fallden heard a sound which, muffled as it was, produced upon him a strange and horrible impression. It was a low cry, or groan—the voice of despair itself.

Fallden stood motionless. All he knew was that he would have given anything in the world to recall the past; to undo the events of that June evening in the Marmion quadrangle.

Then, before Otto could discover his presence, he went noiselessly round the corner of the house, and entered it by the front door. In the hall, he called loudly to the ex-scout, as he went upstairs, so that Radowitz might know he had come back. When

he returned, Radowitz was sitting over the fire with sheets of scribbled music paper on a small table before him. His eyes shone, his cheeks were feverishly bright. He turned with forced gaiety at the sight of Falloden—

‘Well, did you meet them on the road?’

‘Lady Constance, and her friend? Yes. I had a few words with them. How are you now? What did the doctor say to you?’

‘What on earth does it matter!’ said Radowitz impatiently. ‘He was just a fool—a young one—the worst sort—I can put up with the old ones. I know my own case a great deal better than he does.’

‘Does he want you to stop working?’ Falloden stood on the hearth, looking down on the huddled figure in the chair; himself broad and tall and curly-haired, like the divine Odysseus, when Athene had breathed ambrosial youth upon him. But he was pale, and his eyes frowned perpetually under his splendid brows.

‘Some nonsense of that sort!’ said Radowitz. ‘Don’t let’s talk about it.’

They went in to dinner, and Radowitz sent for champagne.

‘That’s the only sensible thing the idiot said—that I might have that stuff whenever I liked.’

His spirits rose with the wine; and presently Falloden could have thought what he had seen from the dark had been a mere illusion. A review in *The Times* of a book of Polish memoirs served to let loose a flood of boastful talk, which jarred abominably on the Englishman. Under the Oxford code, to boast in plain language of your ancestors, or your own performances, meant simply that you were an outsider, not sure of your footing. If a man really had ancestors, or more brains than other people, his neighbours saved him the trouble of talking about them. Only the fools and the *parvenus* trumpeted themselves; a process in any case not worth while, since it defeated its own ends. You might of course be as insolent or arrogant as you pleased; but only an idiot tried to explain why.

In Otto, however, there was the characteristic Slav mingling of quick wits with streaks of childish vanity. He wanted passionately to make this tough Englishman feel what a great country Poland had been and would be again; what great people his ancestors had been; and what a leading part they had played in the national movements. And the more he hit against an answering stubbornness—or coolness—in Falloden, the more he held forth. So that it was an uncomfortable dinner. And again Falloden said to

himself—'Why did I do it? I am only in his way. I shall bore and chill him; and I don't seem to be able to help it.'

But after dinner, as the night frost grew sharper, and as Otto sat over the fire, piling on the coal, Falloden suddenly went and fetched a warm Scotch plaid of his own. When he offered it, Radowitz received it with surprise, and a little annoyance.

'I am not the least cold—thank you!'

But, presently, he had wrapped it round his knees; and some restraint had broken down in Falloden.

'Isn't there a splendid church in Cracow?' he asked casually, stretching himself, with his pipe, in a long chair on the opposite side of the fire.

'One!—five or six!' cried Otto, indignantly. 'But I expect you're thinking of Panna Marya. Panna means Lady. I tell you, you English haven't got anything to touch it!'

'What's it like?—what date?'—said Falloden, laughing.

'I don't know—I don't know anything about architecture. But it's glorious. It's all colour and stained glass—and magnificent tombs—like the gate of Heaven,' said the boy with ardour. 'It's the church that every Pole loves. Some of my ancestors are buried there. And it's the church where, instead of a clock striking, the hours are given out by a watchman who plays a horn. He plays an old air—ever so old—we call it the "Heynal," on the top of one of the towers. The only time I was ever in Cracow I heard a man at a concert—a magnificent player—improvise on it. And it comes into one of Chopin's sonatas.'

He began to hum under his breath a sweet wandering melody. And suddenly he sprang up, and ran to the piano. He played the air with his left hand, embroidering it with delicate arabesques and variations, catching a bass here and there with a flying touch, suggesting marvellously what had once been a rich and complete whole. The injured hand, which had that day been very painful, lay helpless in its sling; the other flashed over the piano, while the boy's blue eyes shone beneath his vivid frieze of hair. Falloden, lying back in his chair, noticed the emaciation of the face, the hollow eyes, the contracted shoulders; and as he did so, he thought of the scene in the Magdalen ballroom—the slender girl, wreathed in pearls, and the brilliant foreign youth—dancing, dancing, with all the eyes of the room upon them.

Presently, with a sound of impatience, Radowitz left the piano. He could do nothing that he wanted to do. He stood at the

window for some minutes looking out at the autumn moon, with his back to Falloden.

Falloden took up one of the books he was at work on for his Fellowship exam. When Radowitz came back to the fire, however, white and shivering, he laid it down again, and once more made conversation. Radowitz was at first unwilling to respond. But he was by nature *bavard*, and Falloden played him with some skill.

Very soon he was talking fast and brilliantly again, about his artistic life in Paris, his friends at the Conservatoire or in the Quartier Latin; and so back to his childish days in Poland, and the rising of '63, in which the family estates near Warsaw had been forfeited. Falloden found it all very strange. The seething, artistic, revolutionary world which had produced Otto was wholly foreign to him; and this patriotic passion for a dead country seemed to his English common sense a waste of force. But in Otto's eyes Poland was not dead; the white eagle, torn and blood-stained though she was, would mount the heavens again; and in those dark skies the stars were already rising!

At eleven, Falloden got up—

'I must go and swat. It was awfully jolly, what you've been telling me. I know a lot I didn't know before.'

A gleam of pleasure shewed in the boy's sunken eyes.

'I expect I'm a bore,' he said, with a shrug; 'and I'd better go to bed.'

Falloden helped him carry up his plaid, his books and papers. In Otto's room, the windows were wide open, but there was a bright fire, and Bateson the scout was waiting to help him undress. Falloden asked some questions about the doctor's orders. Various things were wanted from Oxford. He undertook to get them in the morning.

When he came back to the sitting-room, he stood some time in a brown study. He wondered again whether he had any qualifications at all as a nurse. But he was inclined to think now that Radowitz might be worse off without him; what Constance had said seemed less unreal; and his effort of the evening, as he looked back on it, brought him a certain bitter satisfaction.

The following day, Radowitz came downstairs with the course of the second movement of his symphony clear before him. He worked feverishly all day, now writing, now walking up and down, humming and thinking, now getting out of his piano—a beautiful Erard hired for the winter—all that his maimed state

allowed him to get; and passing hour after hour, between an ecstasy of happy creation, and a state of impotent rage with his own helplessness. Towards sunset he was worn out, and with tea beside him which he had been greedily drinking, he was sitting huddled over the fire, when he heard someone ride up to the front door.

In another minute the sitting-room door opened, and a girl's figure in a riding habit appeared.

'May I come in?' said Connie, flushing rather pink.

Otto sprang up, and drew her in. His fatigue disappeared as though by magic. He seemed all gaiety and force.

'Come in! Sit down and have some tea! I was so depressed five minutes ago—I was fit to kill myself. And now you make the room shine—you come in like a goddess!'

He busied himself excitedly in putting a chair for her, in relighting the spirit kettle, in blowing up the fire.

Constance meanwhile stood in some embarrassment with one hand on the back of a chair—a charming vision in her close fitting habit, and the same black *tricorné* that she had worn in the Lathom Woods, at Falloden's side.

'I came to bring you a book, dear Mr. Otto, the book we talked of yesterday.' She held out a paper-covered volume. 'But I mustn't stay.'

'Oh, do stay!' he implored her. 'Don't bother about Mrs. Grundy. I'm so tired and so bored. Anybody may visit an invalid. Think this is a nursing home, and you're my daily visitor. Falloden's miles away on a drag-hunt. Ah, that's right!' He waved his hand as he saw that she had seated herself. 'Now you shall have some tea!'

She let him provide her, watching him the while with slightly frowning brows. How ill he looked—how ill! Her heart sank.

'Dear Mr. Otto, how are you? You don't seem so well to-day.'

'I have been working myself to death. It won't come right—this beastly *Andante*. It's too jerky—it wants *liaison*. And I can't hear it—I can't *hear* it!—that's the devilish part of it.'

And taking his helpless hand out of the sling in which it had been resting, he struck it bitterly against the arm of his chair. The tears came to Connie's eyes.

'Don't!—you'll hurt yourself. It'll be all right—it'll be all right! You'll hear it in your mind.' And bending forward under a sudden impulse, she took the maimed hand in her two hands

—so small and soft—and lifting it tenderly she put her lips to it.

He looked at her in amazement.

‘You do that—for me?’

‘Yes. Because you are a great artist—and a brave man!’ she said, gulping. ‘You are not to despair. Your music is in your soul—your brain. Other people shall play it for you.’

He calmed down.

‘At least I am not deaf, like Beethoven,’ he said, trying to please her. ‘That would have been worse.—Do you know last night, Falloden and I had a glorious talk. He was awfully decent. He made me tell him all about Poland, and my people. He never scoffed once. He makes me do what the doctor says. And last night—when it was freezing cold—he brought a rug and wrapped it round me. Think of that!’—he looked at her—half-shamefaced, half-laughing—‘*Falloden!*’

Her eyes shone.

‘I’m glad!’ she said softly. ‘I’m glad!’

‘Yes, but do you know why he’s kind—why he’s here at all?’ he asked her, abruptly.

‘What’s the good of silly questions?’ she said hastily. ‘Take it as it comes.’

He laughed.

‘He does it—I’m going to say it!—yes, I *am*—and you are not to be angry—he does it because—simply—he’s in love with *you*!’

Connie flushed again, more deeply, and he, already alarmed by his own boldness, looked at her nervously.

‘You are quite wrong.’ Her tone was quiet, but decided. ‘He did it, first of all, because of what you did for his father——’

‘I did nothing!’ interposed Radowitz.

She took no notice.

‘And secondly’—her voice shook a little—‘because—he was sorry. Now—*now*—he is doing it’—suddenly her smile flashed out, with its touch of humour—‘just simply because he likes it!’

It was a bold assertion. She knew it. But she straightened her slight shoulders, prepared to stick to it.

Radowitz shook his head.

‘And what am I doing it for? Do you remember when I said to you I loathed him?’

‘No—not him.’

‘Well, something in him—the chief thing, it seemed to me then. I felt towards him really—as a man might feel towards his murderer

—or the murderer of someone else, some innocent, helpless person who had given no offence. Hatred—loathing—*abhorrence*!—you couldn't put it too strongly. Well then,—he began to fidget with the fire, tongs in hand, building it up, while he went on thinking aloud—'God brought us together in that strange manner. By the way'—he turned to her—'are you a Christian?'

'I—I don't know. I suppose I am.'

'I am,' he said firmly. 'I am a practising Catholic. Catholicism with us Poles is partly religion, partly patriotism—do you understand? I go to confession—I am a communicant. And for some time I couldn't go to Communion at all. I always felt Falloden's hand on my shoulder, as he was pushing me down the stairs; and I wanted *to kill him*!—just that! You know our Polish blood runs hotter than yours. I didn't want the college to punish him. Not at all. It was my affair. After I saw you in town, it grew worse—it was an obsession. When we first got to Yorkshire, Sorell and I, and I knew that Falloden was only a few miles away, I never could get quit of it—of the thought that some day—somewhere—I should kill him. I never, if I could help it, crossed a certain boundary line that I had made for myself, between our side of the moor, and the side which belonged to the Fallodens. I couldn't be sure of myself if I had come upon him unawares. Oh, of course, he would soon have got the better of me—but there would have been a struggle—I should have attacked him—and I might have had a revolver. So for your sake'—he turned to look at her with his hollow blue eyes—'I kept away. Then, one evening, I quite forgot all about it. I was thinking of the theme for the slow movement in my symphony, and I didn't notice where I was going. I walked on and on over the hill—and at last I heard a man groaning—and there was Sir Arthur—by the stream. I saw at once that he was dying, and I took a card from his waistcoat pocket, which told me who he was. There I sat, alone with him. He asked me not to leave him. He said something about Douglas. "Poor Douglas!" And when the horrible thing came back—the last time—he just whispered, "Pray!" and I said our Catholic prayers—that our priest had said when my mother died. Then Falloden came—just in time—and instead of wanting to kill him, I waited there, a little way off—and prayed hard for myself and him! Queer, wasn't it? And afterwards—you know—I saw his mother. Then the next day, I confessed to a dear old priest, who was very kind to me, and on the Sunday he gave me Communion. He said God had been very gracious to me; and I saw what he

meant. That very week I had a hæmorrhage, the first I ever had.'

Connie gave a sudden, startled cry. He turned again to smile at her.

'Didn't you know? No, I believe no one knew, but Sorell and the doctors. It was nothing. It's quite healed. But the strange thing was how extraordinarily happy I felt that week. I didn't hate Falloden any more. It was as though a sharp thorn had gone from one's mind. It didn't last long of course, the queer ecstatic feeling. There was always my hand—and I got very low again. But *something* lasted; and when Falloden said that extraordinary thing—I don't believe he meant to say it at all!—suggesting we should settle together for the winter—I knew that I must do it. It was a kind of miracle—one thing after another—*driving us*.'

His voice dropped. He remained gazing absently into the fire.

'Dear Otto'—said Constance softly—'you have forgiven him?'

He smiled.

'What does that matter? *Have you?*'

His eager eyes searched her face. She faltered under them.

'He doesn't care whether I have or not.'

At that he laughed out.

'Doesn't he? I say, did you ask us both to come—on purpose—that afternoon?—in the garden?'

She was silent.

'It was bold of you!' he said, in the same laughing tone. 'But it's answered. Unless, of course, I bore him to death. I talk a lot of nonsense—I can't help it—and he bears it. And he says hard, horrid things, sometimes—and my blood boils—and I bear it. And I expect he wants to break off a hundred times a day—and so do I. Yet here we stay. And it's *you*'—he raised his head deliberately—'it's *you* that are really at the bottom of it.'

Constance rose trembling from her chair.

'Don't say any more, dear Otto. I didn't mean any harm. I—I was so sorry for you both.'

He laughed again.

'You've got to marry him!' he said triumphantly. 'There!—you may go now—But you'll come again soon. I know you will!'

She seemed to slip, to melt, out of the room. But he had a last vision of flushed cheeks, and half-reproachful eyes.

(To be continued.)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'CORNHILL.'

DEAR SIR,—If it gives Mr. Russell any pleasure to accuse me of 'living in a happy remoteness from affairs,' and of having 'only just awakened from a slumber which seems to have lasted longer than that of Rip Van Winkle,' it would be cruel of me to object. But the proof of my guilt, it seems, is to be found in the article I wrote in the CORNHILL on 'The Duke of Wellington and Miss J.' That article, Mr. Russell thinks, proves that I had only just discovered Miss J. and her correspondence with the Duke. As a matter of fact I have been familiar with the volume published by Mr. T. Fisher Unwin for more than twenty years, and it must be fifteen years ago since I wrote an article on the subject in an Australian magazine. But Mr. Russell himself thinks the letters of Miss J. so little known, and so very interesting, that he himself expends another article on them, three months later than mine, and taking exactly the same view of them! It seems clear that there are two Rip Van Winkles—one in England and one in Australia: and the English Van Winkle is even drowsier, and wakes later, than his Australian kinsman.

I should not trouble you with this note, however, except for the opportunity it gives me of apologising for an injustice to Sir Herbert Maxwell which I committed in the article I wrote in the CORNHILL. I represented him as saying the Duke 'must have been inexpressibly bored by the correspondence,' and the words are in inverted commas, giving the reader the impression these were the exact words Sir Herbert Maxwell used. I apologise for those unfortunate inverted commas. The words they seem to quote were not the precise words Sir Herbert Maxwell used in his 'Life of Wellington,' and they do not accurately convey his meaning. 'The letters,' he says, *some might think* were of the very kind to bore the Duke, whose religion was of a somewhat conventional kind.' But Sir Herbert Maxwell does not say that that was his personal opinion.

Yours truly,

W. H. FITCHETT.

NOTE.—In her article, 'Dublin Days: the Rising,' which appeared in my July number, Mrs. Hamilton Norway, on page 51, repeats the current story that Messrs. Jacob were ready to let the military blow up their biscuit factory, for they would never make another biscuit in Ireland. In justice to Messrs. Jacob, let me add that I have since learnt on the one unimpeachable authority that this story, however picturesque, is wholly apocryphal.

THE EDITOR.

